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(12) **United States Patent**
Henderson(10) **Patent No.:** **US 6,278,862 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Aug. 21, 2001**(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
ENHANCING THE EFFICIENT
COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION IN
AN ALPHANUMERIC PAGING NETWORK**(76) **Inventor:** **Daniel A. Henderson**, 33300 Mission
Blvd., Union City, CA (US) 94587(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.This patent is subject to a terminal dis-
claimer.(21) **Appl. No.:** **08/177,851**(22) **Filed:** **Jan. 5, 1994**(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **H03Q 7/00; G08B 5/22**(52) **U.S. Cl.** **455/31.1; 340/825.27;**
340/825.44(58) **Field of Search** 379/56, 63, 355,
379/62; 340/825.44, 825.27; 455/355, 31.1(56) **References Cited****U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**4,065,642 12/1977 McClure 179/18 B
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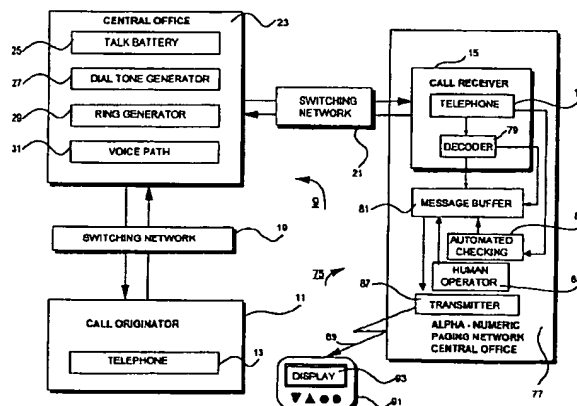
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Primary Examiner—Edward L. Coles, Sr.**Assistant Examiner**—Fan Lee(74) **Attorney, Agent, or Firm**—Melvin A. Hunn(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method and apparatus is described for enhancing the communication of data in an alphanumeric paging network. In accordance with the present invention, caller-identification information is automatically transmitted through a telephone network to a central office of a alphanumeric paging network when a page-originating communicant engages the network. The caller-identification information preferably includes numeric data which identifies the telephone number of the particular telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant to engage the alphanumeric paging network, and alphanumeric text which identifies the entity associated in the telephone directory with that particular telephone number. This information may be utilized in an automated fashion to reduce the required interaction between the alphanumeric paging network and the page-originating communicant. In particular it is helpful in minimizing the amount of human interaction required. The page-originating communicant may be challenged or queried to determine the veracity and accuracy of the information transmitted in the caller-identification signal, preferably in an automated fashion utilizing a synthesized voice presentation of questions coupled with responses provided by the page-originating communicant with the key pad of the particular telephone being utilized by him or her. The page-originating communicant may then be optionally engaged by a human or automated operator which then receives an optional message for transmission to the page-receiving communicant along with the caller-identification information. Upon receipt, the portable communication device carried by the page-receiving communicant decodes the information and utilizes it in a manner to determine what is displayed on the display of the portable communication device.

6 Claims, 23 Drawing Sheets

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* cited by examiner

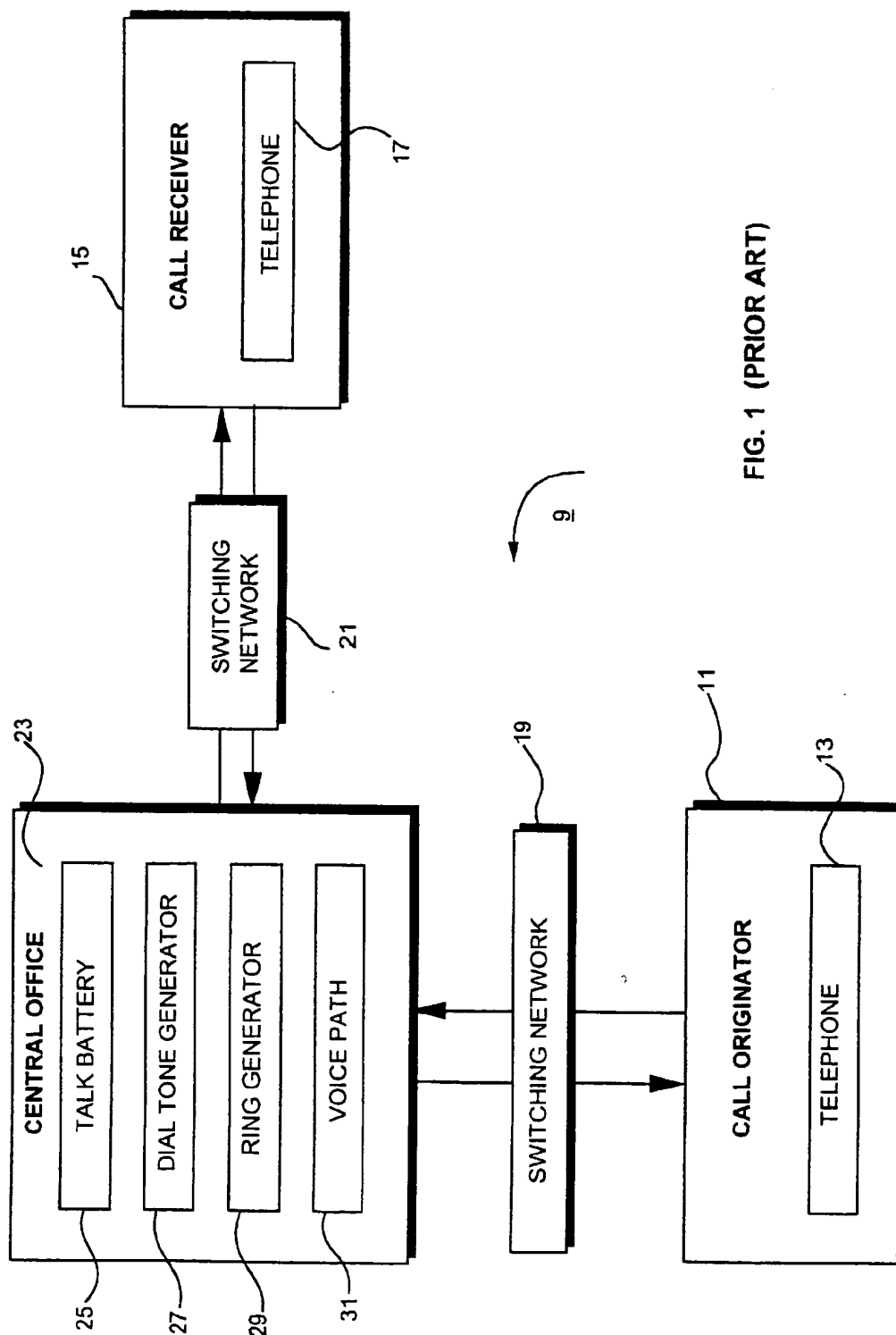
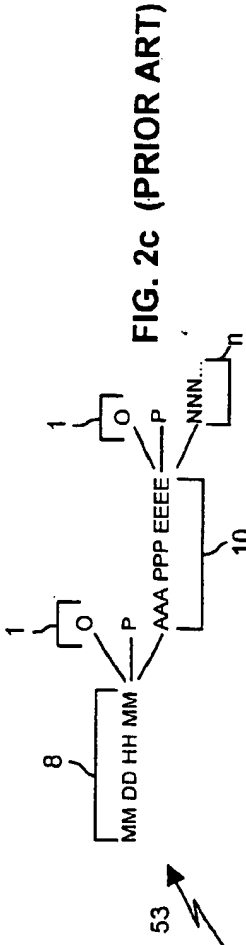
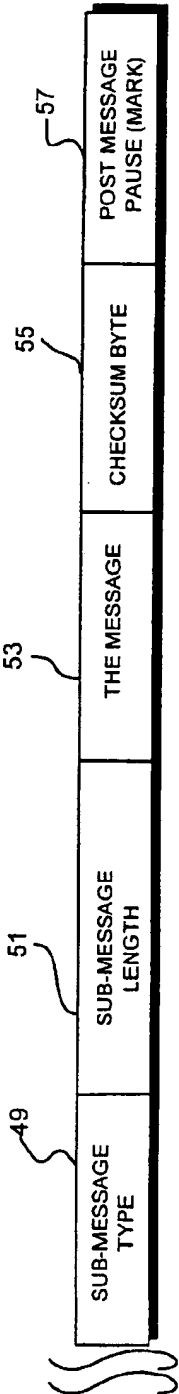
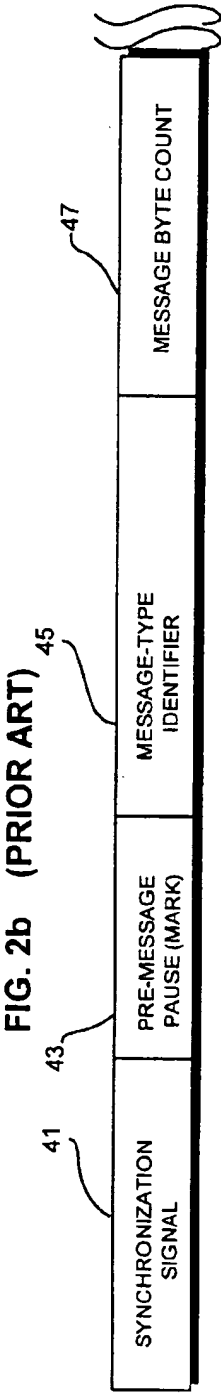
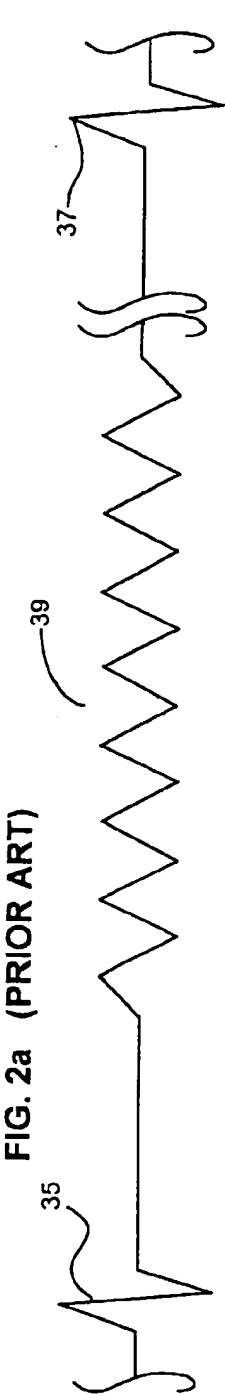


FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART)



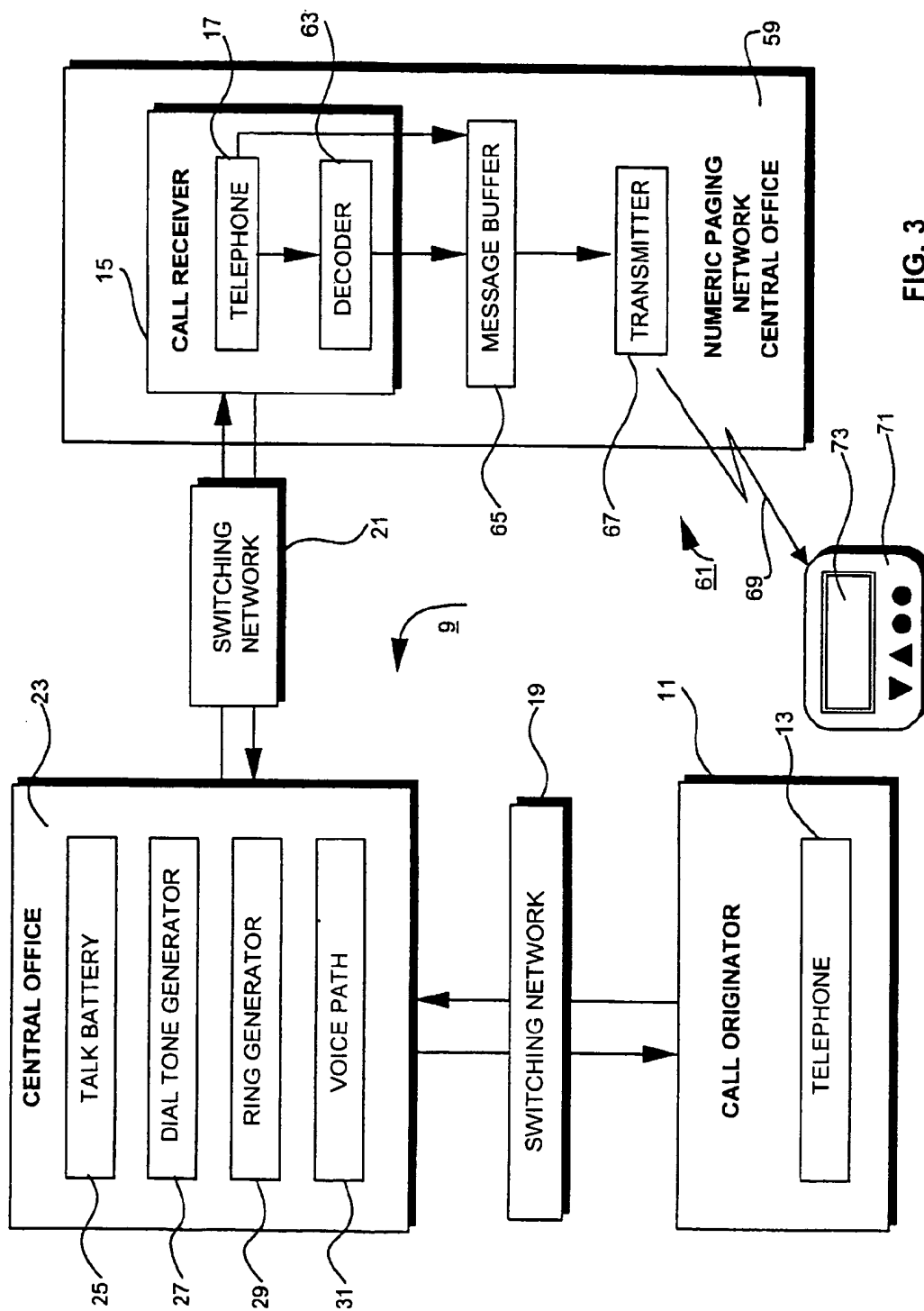


FIG. 3

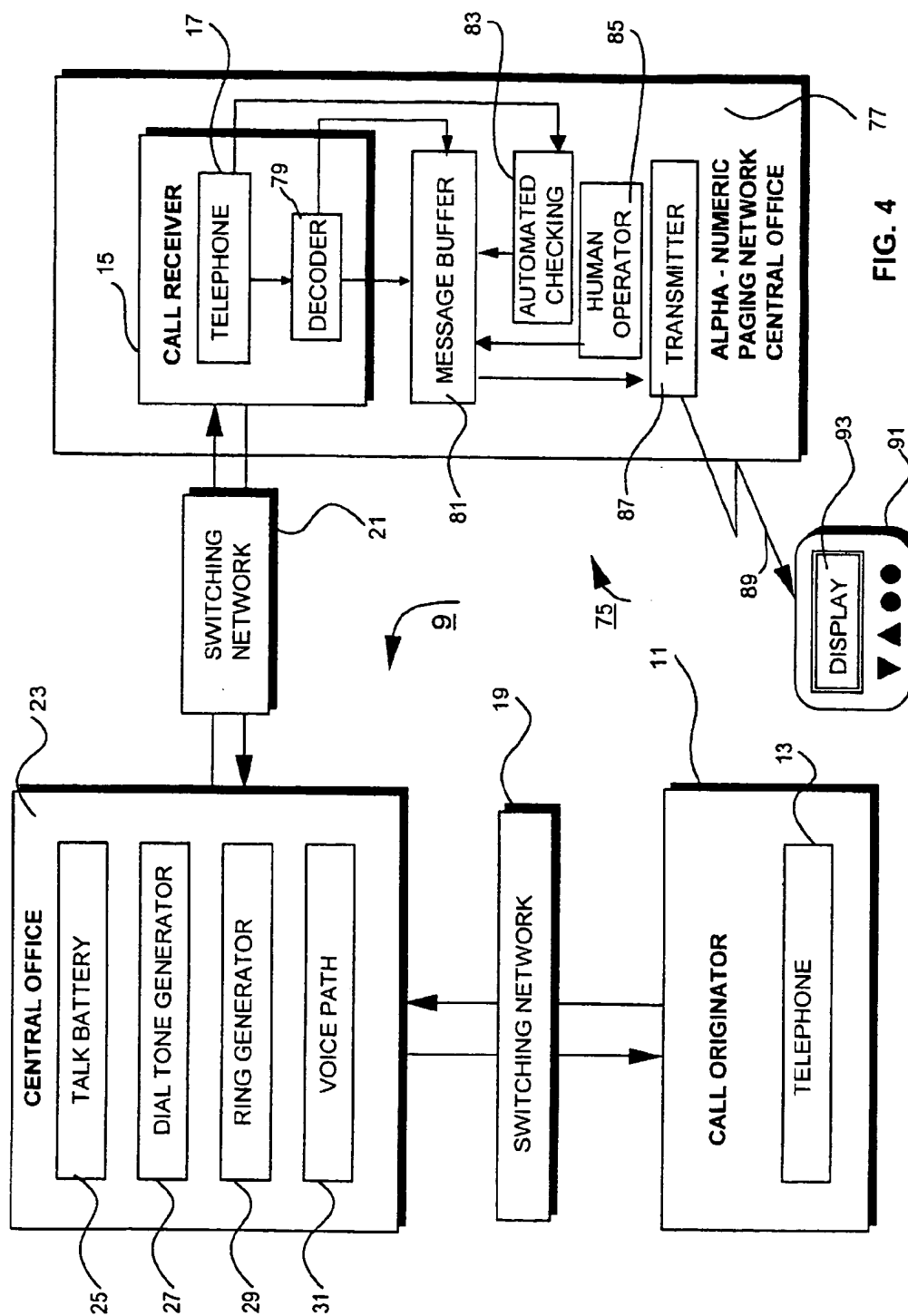


FIG. 4

MESSAGE CODE NO.	TEXTUAL MESSAGE
* 1	CALL WHEN YOU RETURN
* 2	VOICE MAIL RECEIVED
* 3	FAX MAIL RECEIVED
* 4	ELECTRONIC MAIL RECEIVED
* 5	IMAGE DATA RECEIVED
* 6	OTHER DATA RECEIVED
* 911	CALL IMMEDIATELY
.	
.	
.	

FIG. 5

1	CALLER LOCATION DATA (Numeric Caller ID Data from Tel. Co.)	CALLER IDENTIFICATION DATA (DTMF ENTRY BY CALLER)	CALLER MESSAGE CODE (DTMF ENTRY)
2	NNNNN...	ABC...	NN
	MMMMM...	DEF	MM
49	XXXX...	LMN...	Z1
50	KKKK...	WXY...	02

FIG. 6

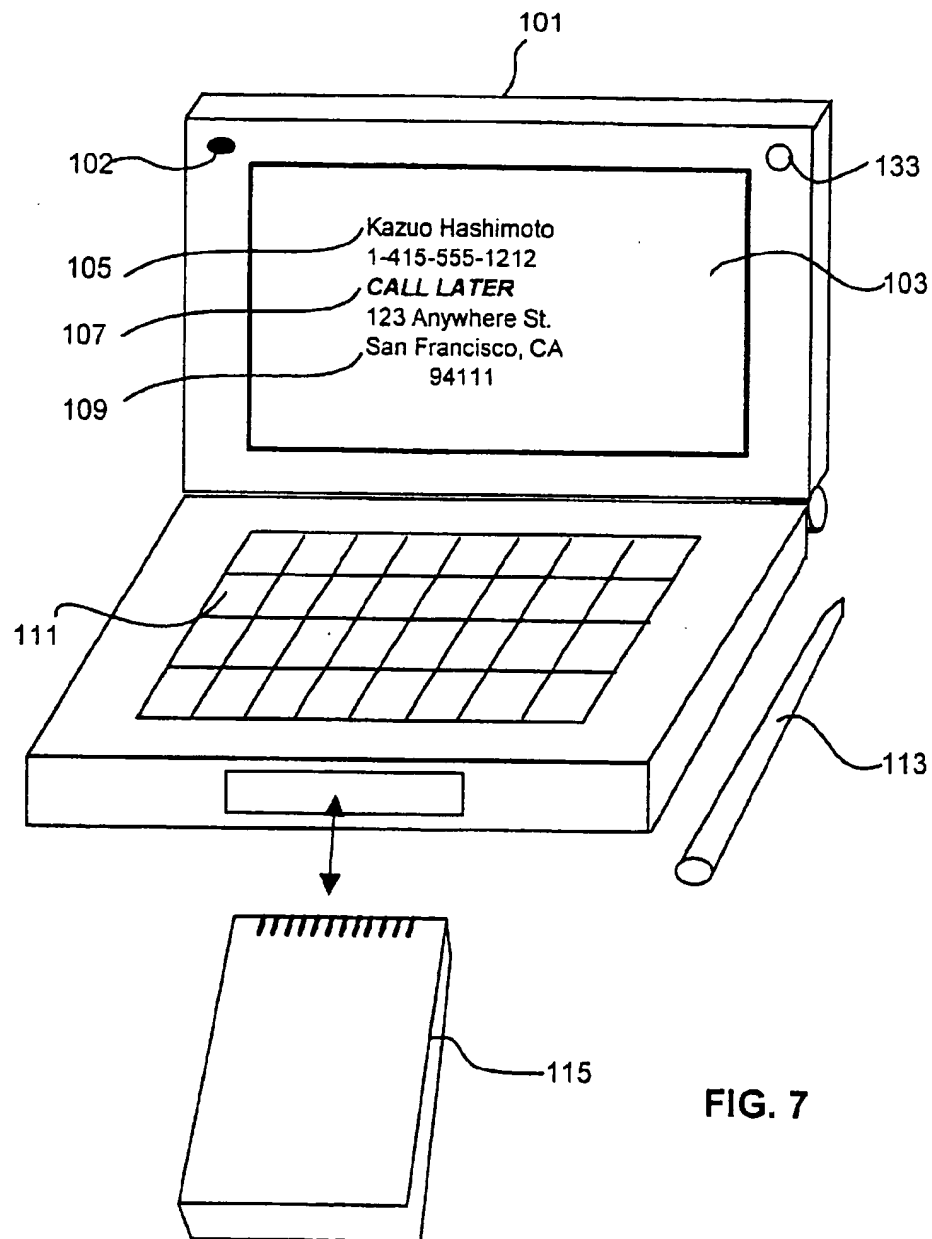


FIG. 7

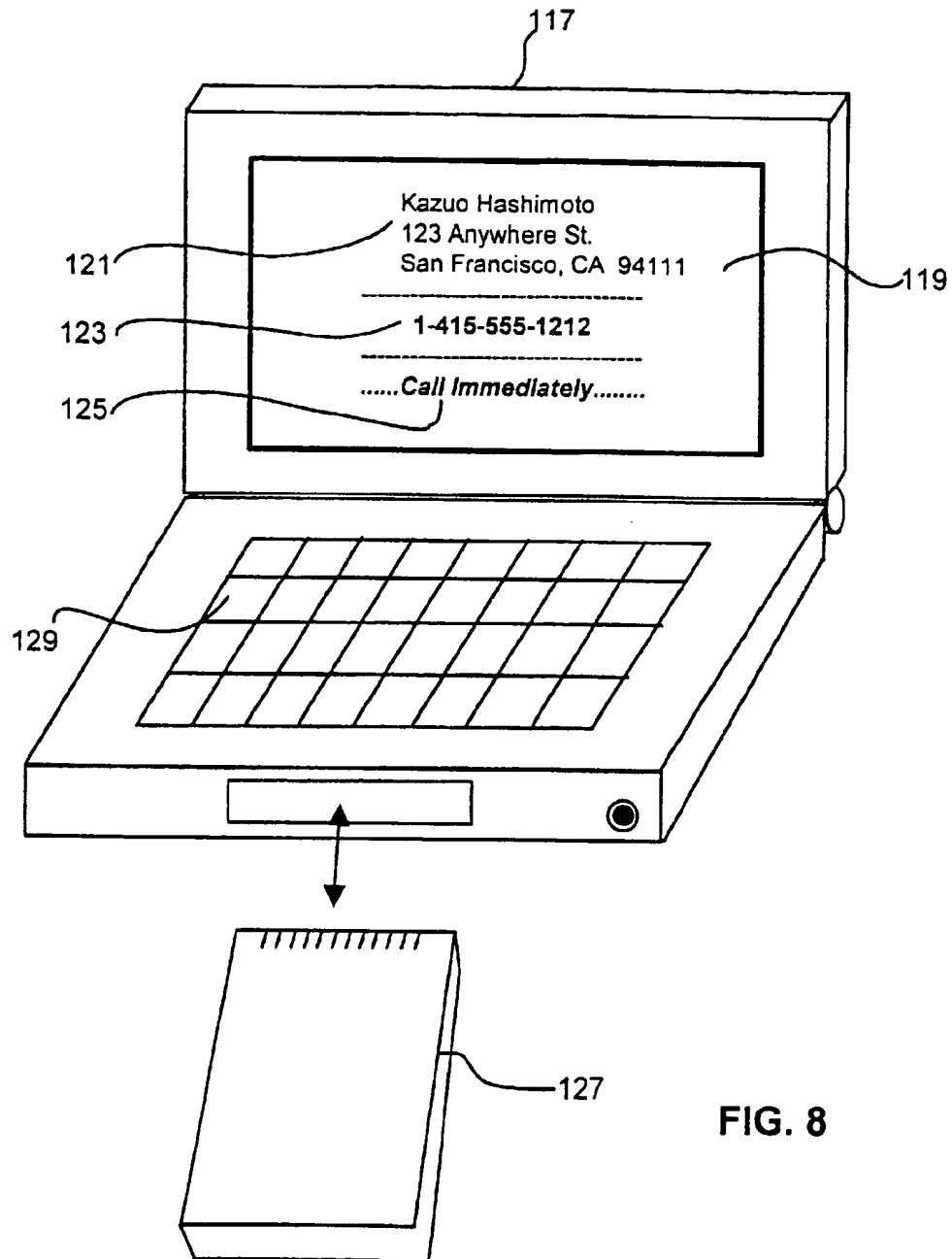


FIG. 8

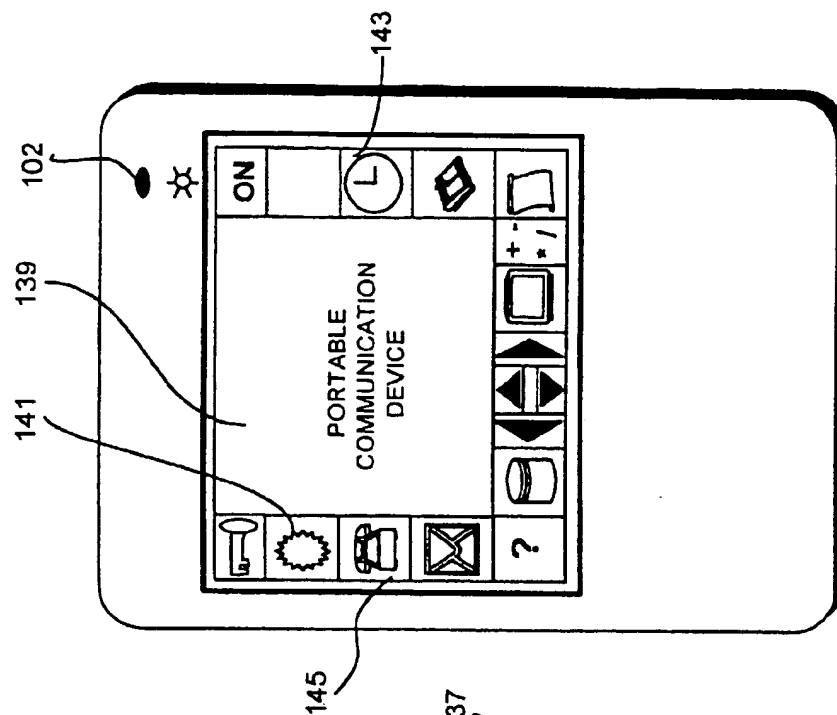


FIG. 9c

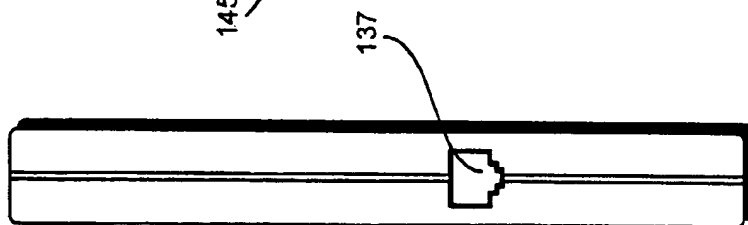


FIG. 9b

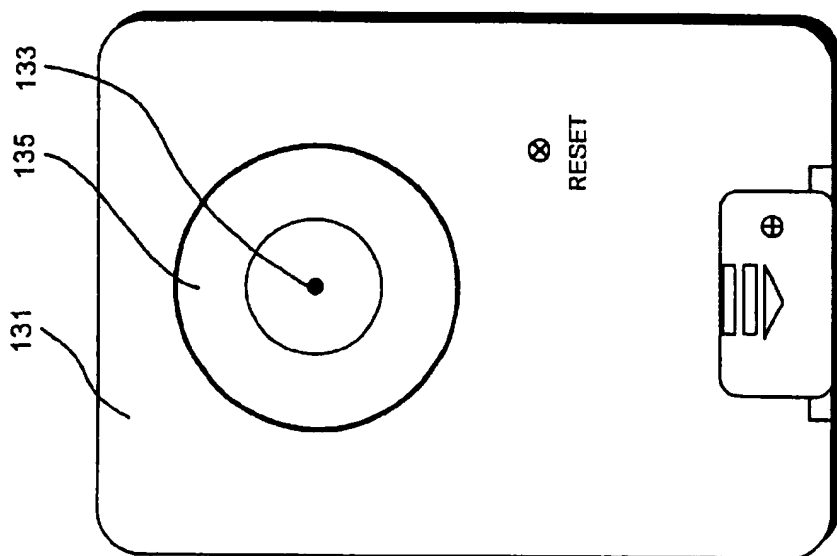
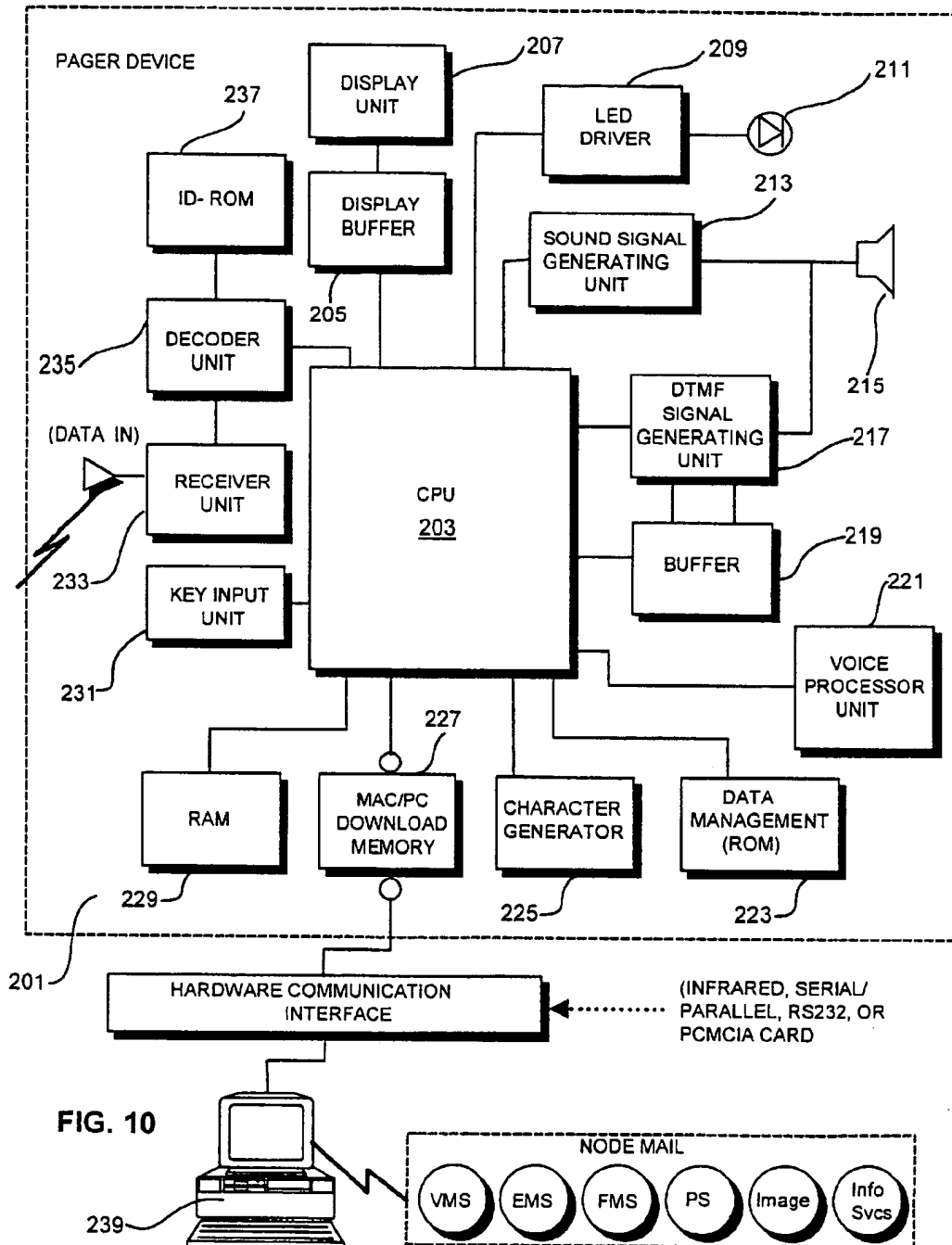
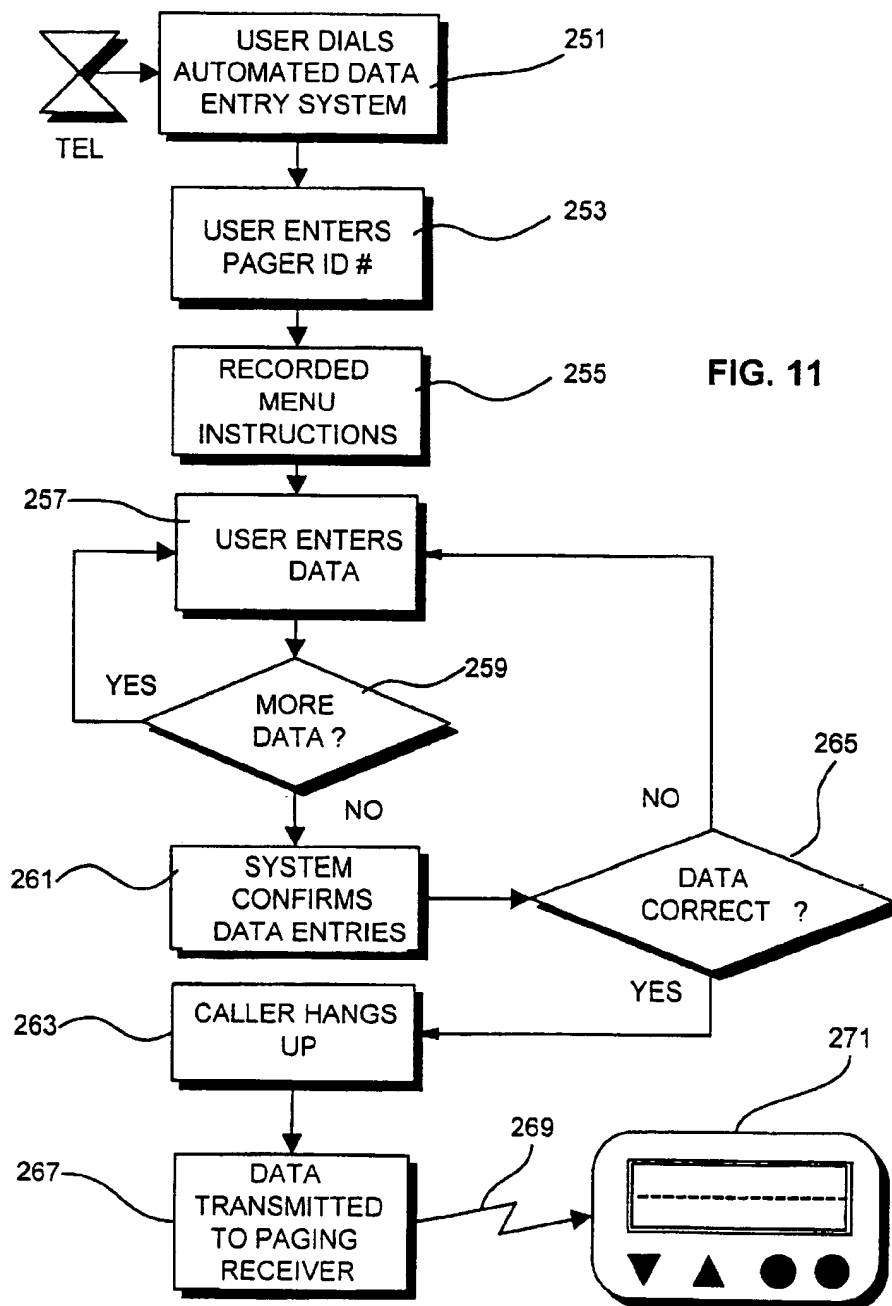


FIG 9a





[illegible]

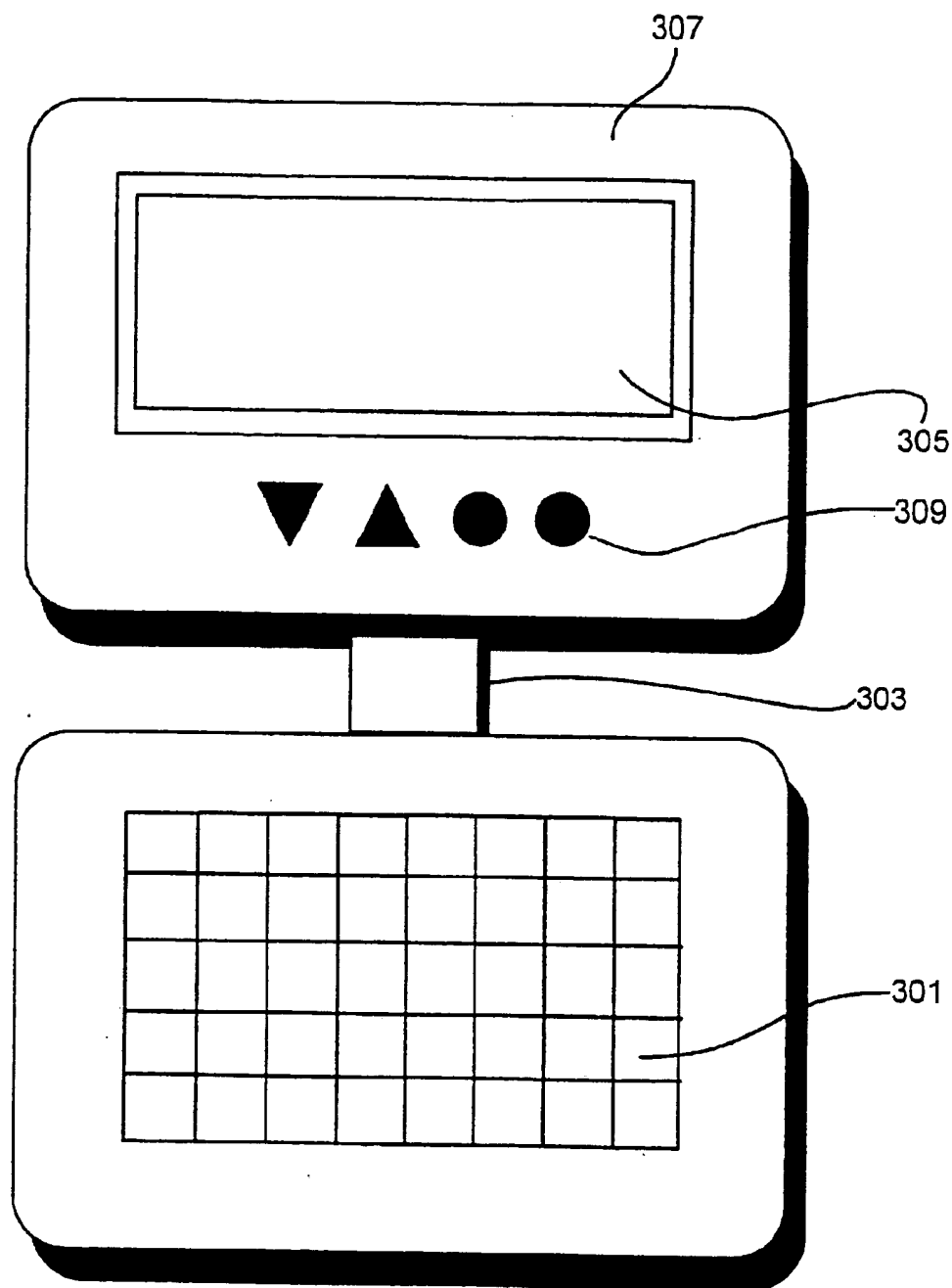


FIG. 13

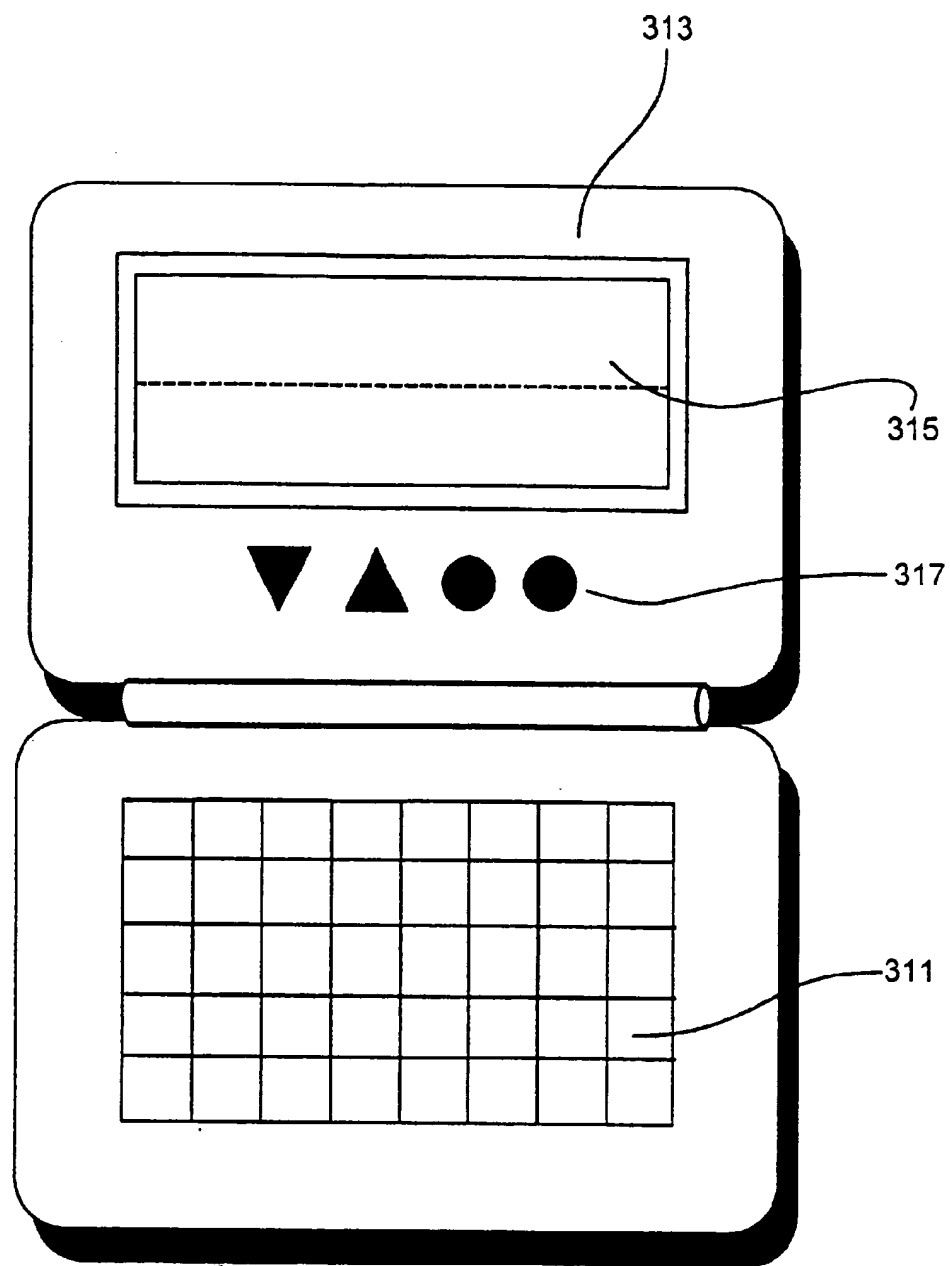


FIG. 14

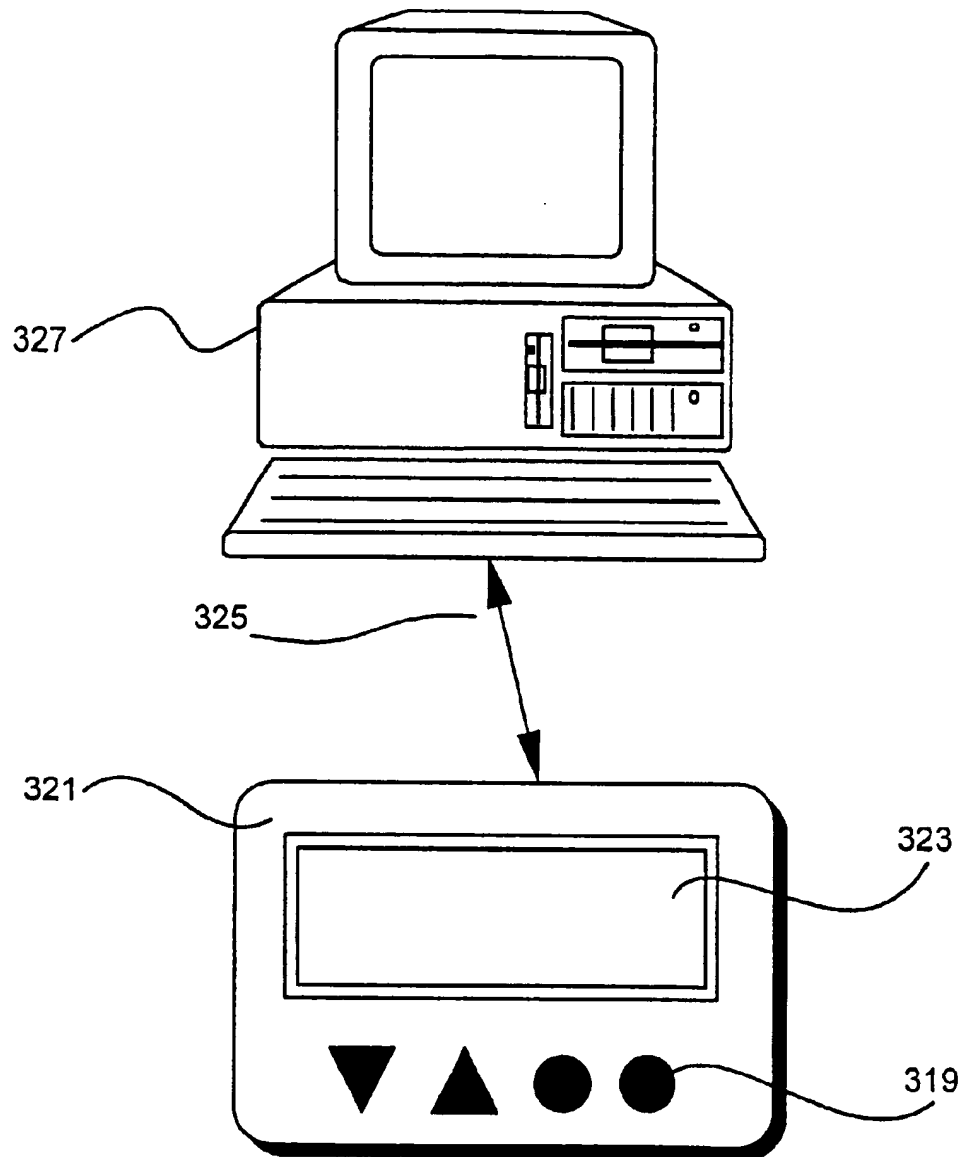


FIG. 15

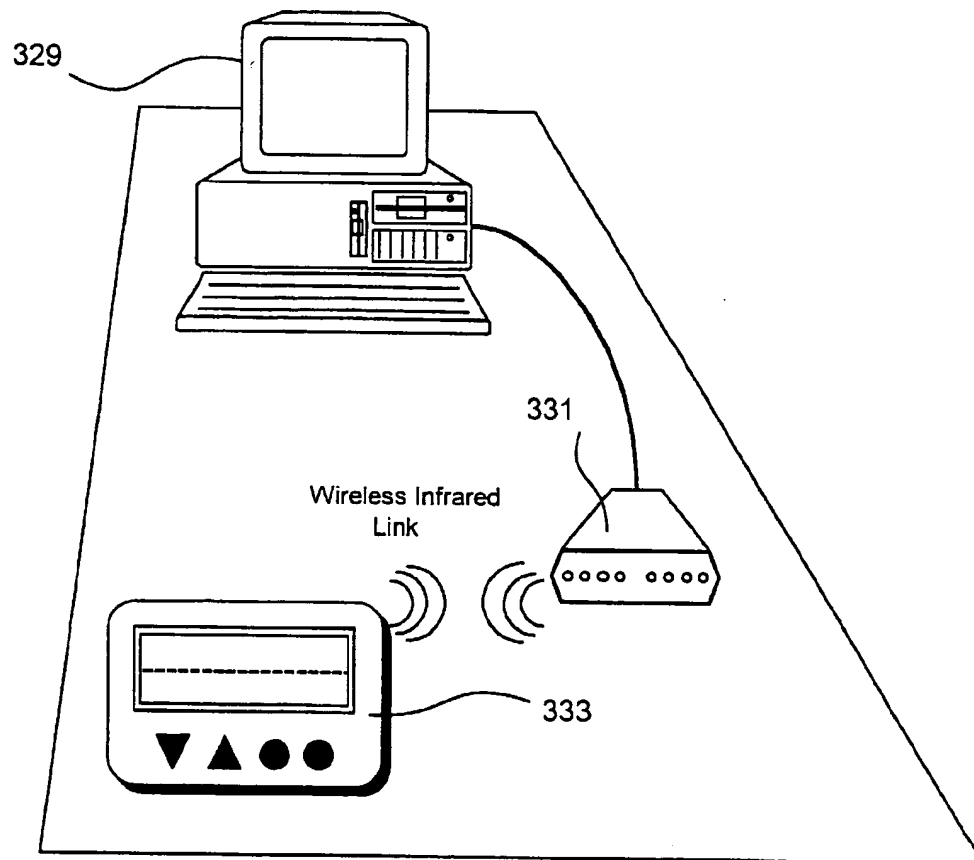


FIG. 16

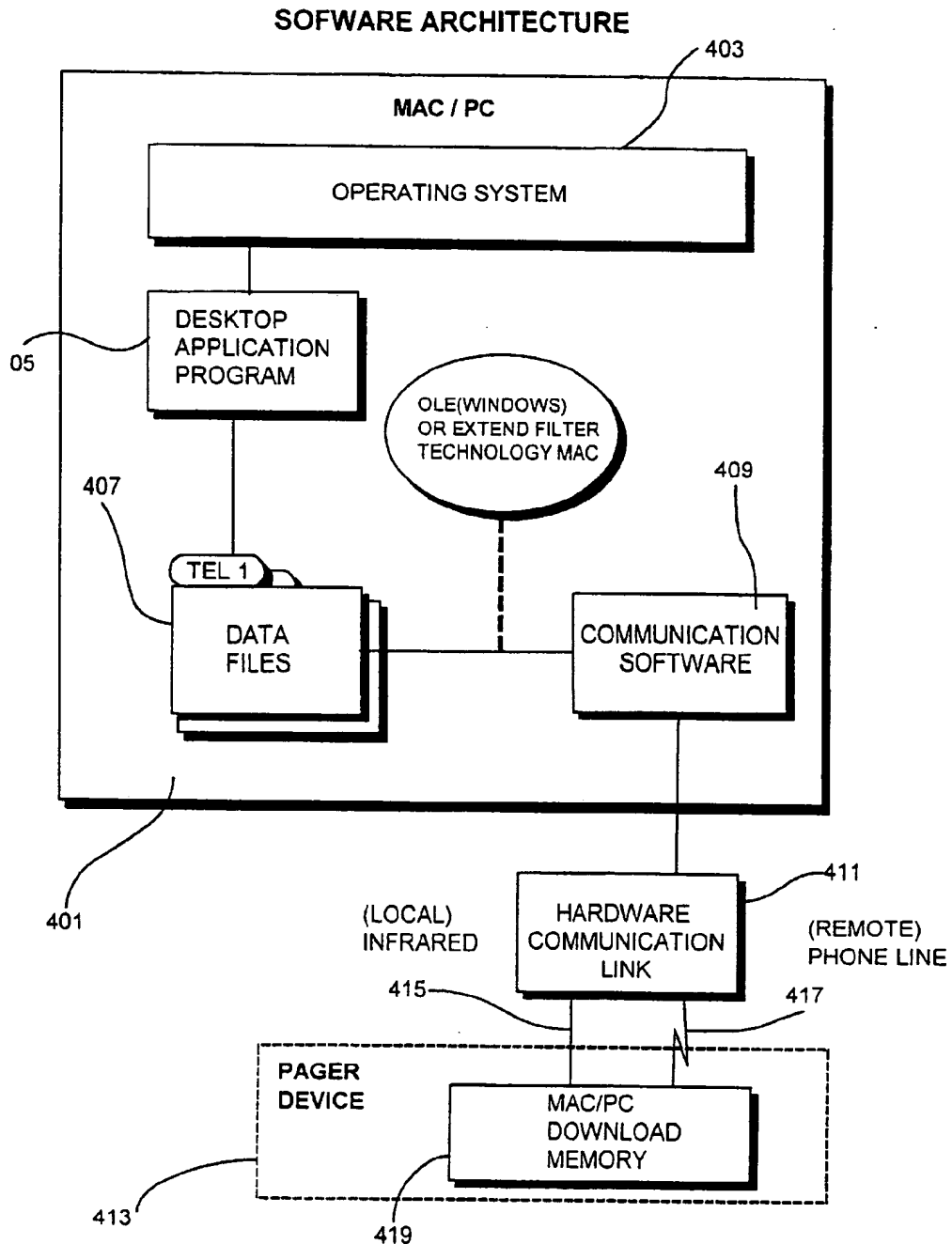
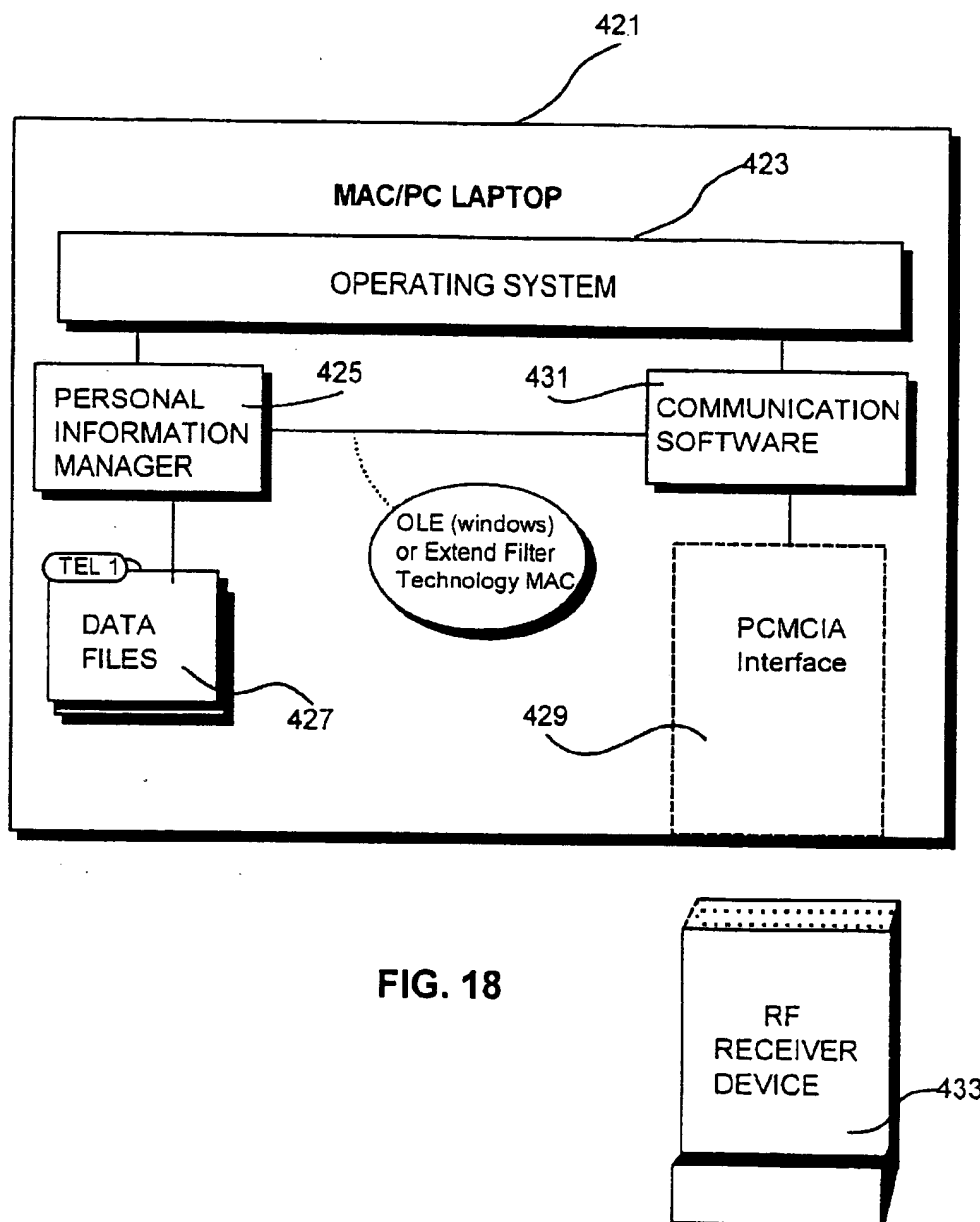


FIG. 17



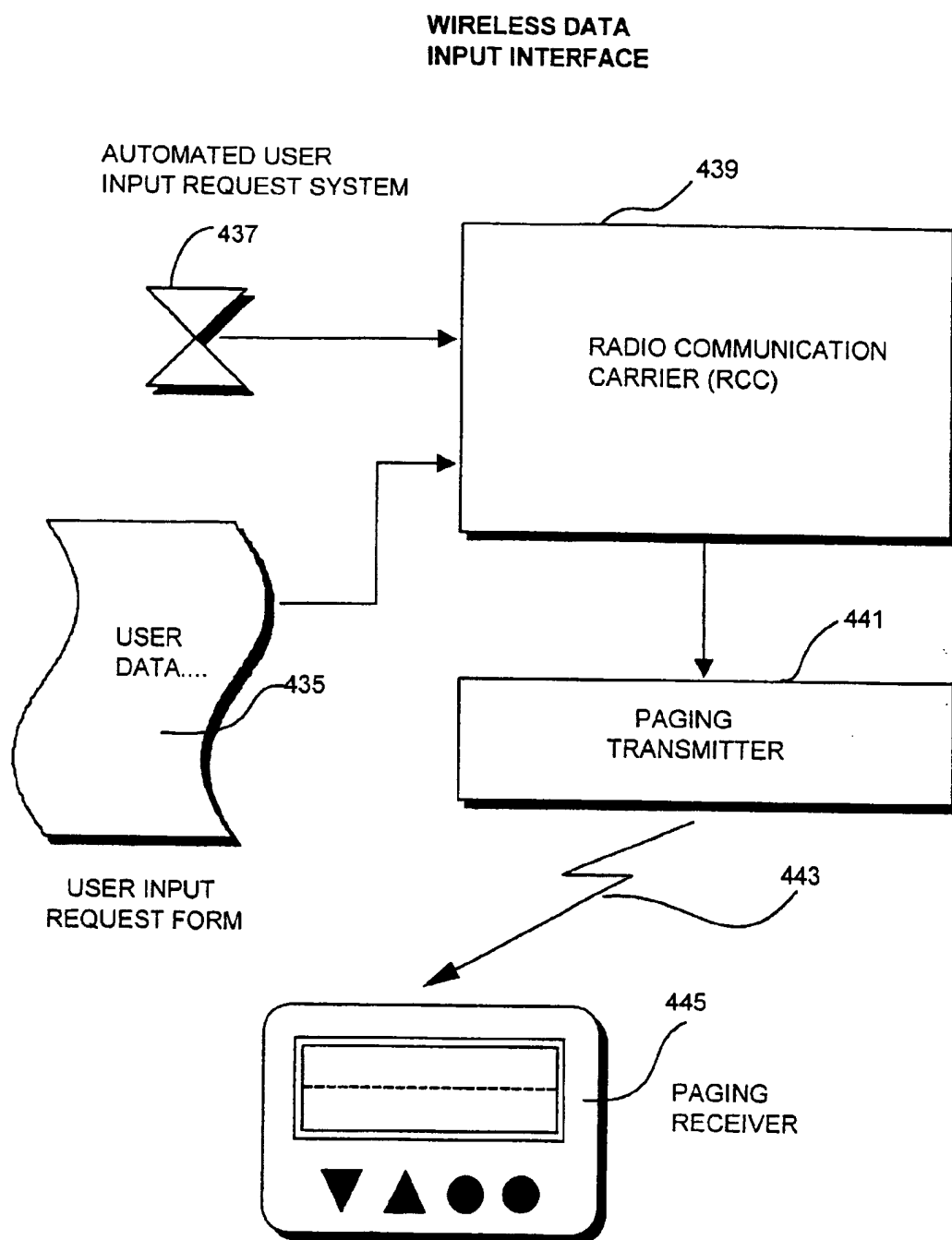
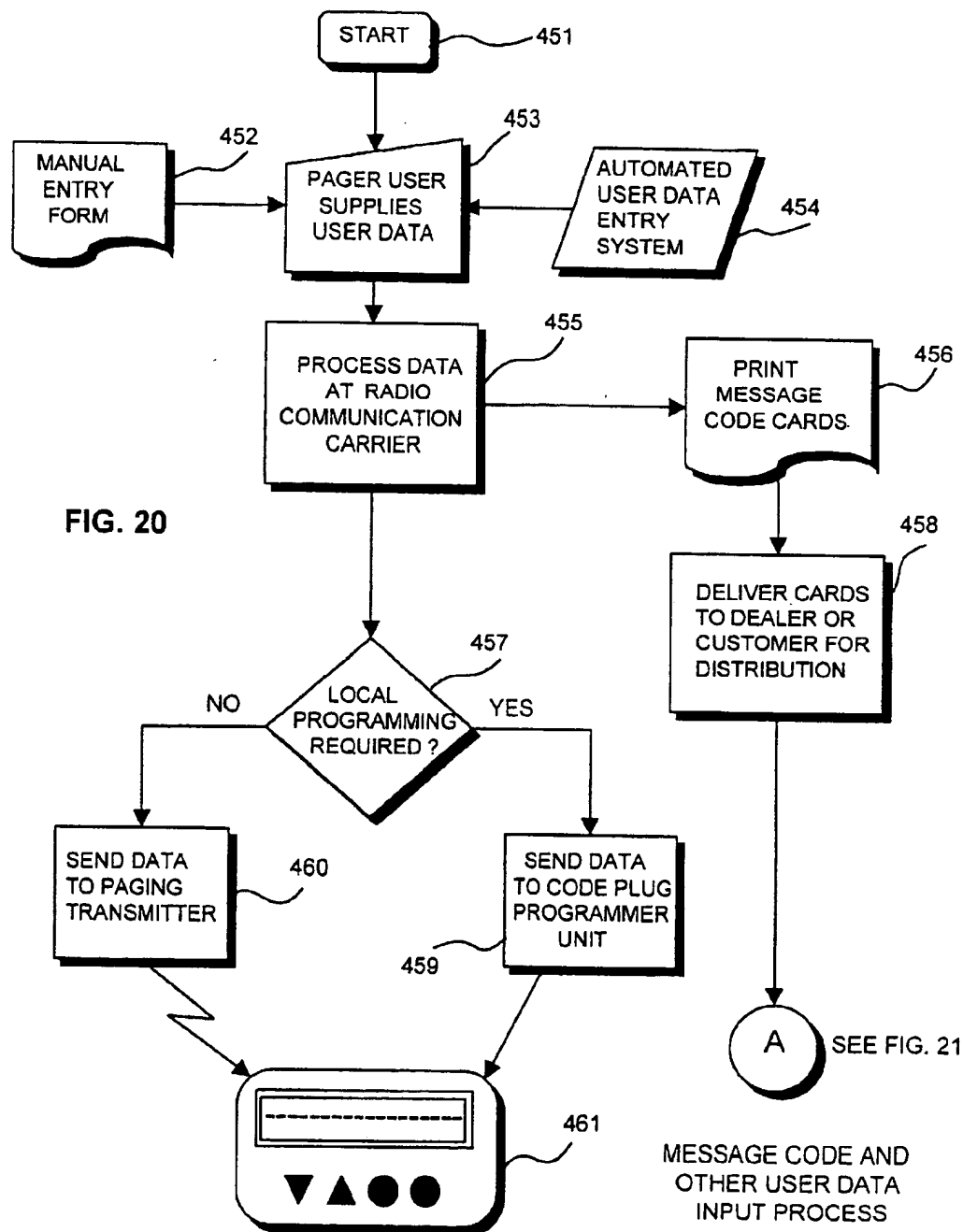


FIG. 19



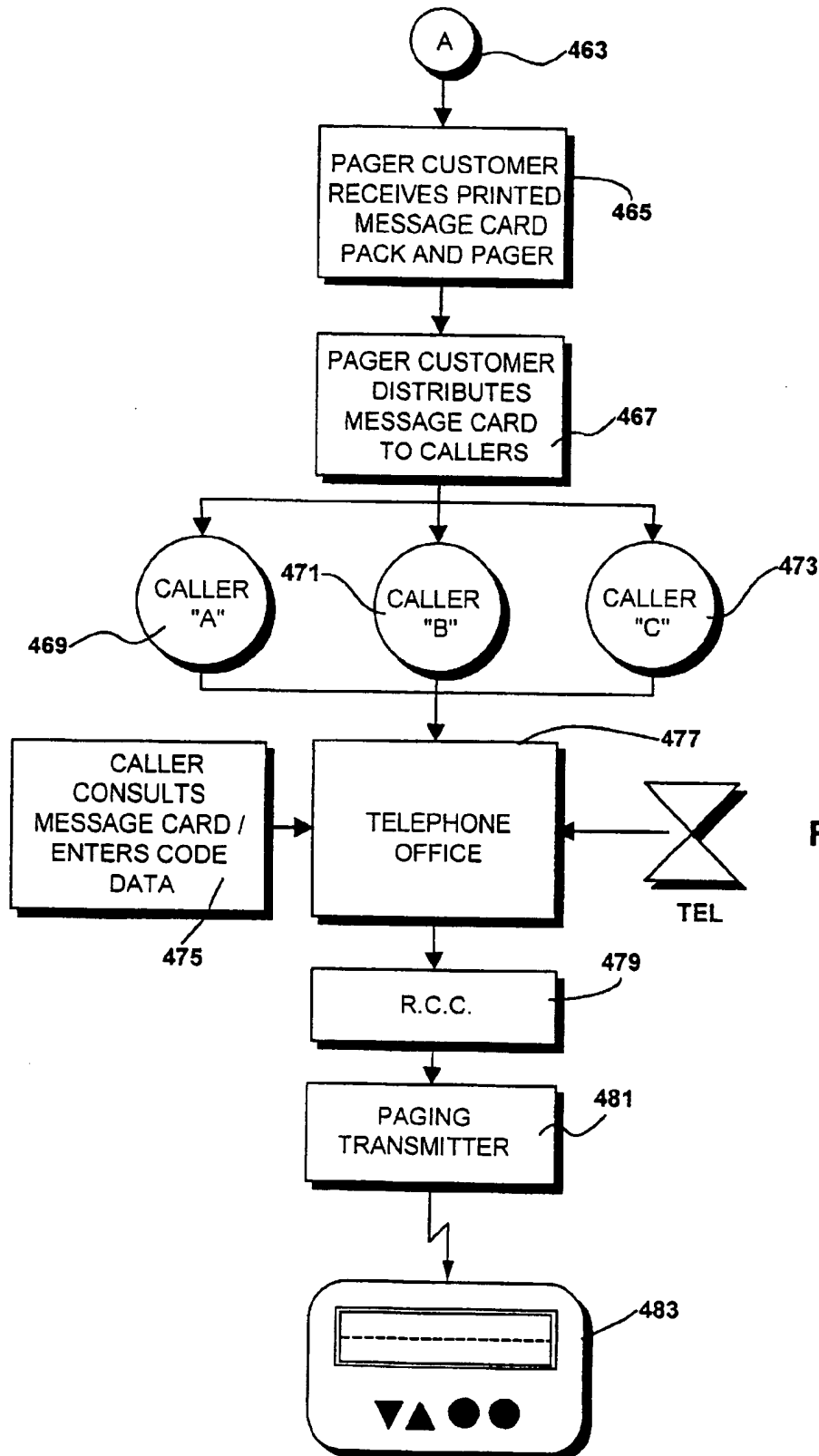


FIG. 21

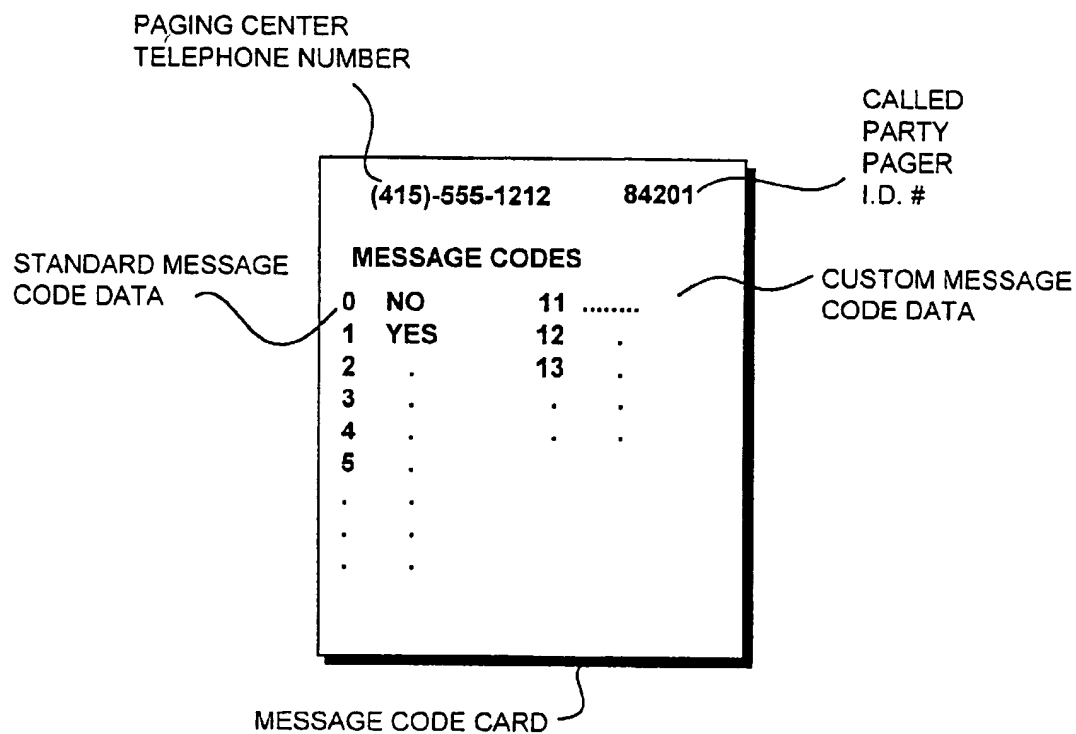


FIG. 22

SAMPLE ENTRY

MESSAGE CODE	(PLEASE PRINT)
11	P I C K U P T H E K I D S
12	
.	.
.	.
.	.
.	.
.	.
PHONE DATA	NAME DATA
5 5 5 1 2 1 2	JOHN SMITH
5 5 5 1 3 1 3	JOHN SMITH - FAX
.	.
.	.
.	.

SAMPLE ENTRY

MANUAL USER DATA ENTRY FORM

FIG. 23

1

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENHANCING THE EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION IN AN ALPHANUMERIC PAGING NETWORK

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates in general to wireless information communication systems, and in particular to numeric paging systems.

2. Description of the Prior Art

An alphanumeric paging network allows a page-originating communicant to utilize a telephone network to access the paging network and initiate a page to a page-receiving communicant in the form of a page announce, coupled with alphanumeric textual data. Typically, the page-receiving communicant has possession of a portable communication device which (1) receives radio frequency paging signals, and (2) provides a page announce signal in the event the page is received by the page-receiving communicant. Additionally, typically, the portable communication device includes an alphanumeric display which then displays the alphanumeric text data which is transmitted via radio frequency signals between a central station of the paging network and the remotely located page-receiving communicant. Once the page-receiving communicant is altered, he or she may view the display on the portable communication device and make a decision on whether or not to place a call to the telephone number or entity identified in the display of the portable communication device.

Alphanumeric paging networks are considerably more expensive than numeric paging networks, because numeric paging networks remain substantially automated, while alphanumeric paging networks most frequently require the intervention of a human operator. In practice, the page-originating communicant places a call to a telephone number identified with the alphanumeric paging service. The human operator answers the call, and takes a detailed alphanumeric message which is dictated by the page-originating communicant. The human operator reads the message back to verify its accurate transcription, and then initiates the page which includes the alphanumeric textual information which has been transcribed. The human interaction required for these types of alphanumeric paging networks is very expensive when compared to the purely numeric paging networks which do not require human intervention. Certain types of alphanumeric paging networks allow the user to utilize a keyboard or other data input device to define the alphanumeric textual data themselves, thus not requiring the input or assistance of a human operator. However, these types of alphanumeric paging networks are of limited value, since computing devices are still not so widely distributed as to make this universally practical.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is one objective of the present invention to provide a method and apparatus for facilitating and enhancing the communication of information over an alphanumeric paging network, which allows the operator of the alphanumeric paging network to more efficiently and accurately handle interactions with page-originating communicants.

It is another objective of the present invention to provide a method and apparatus for enhancing and improving the communication of information over an alphanumeric paging

2

network, which automatically sends caller identification information, including numeric information and alphabetic information, over the telephone network during interactions between a page-originating communicant and the paging network, thus enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of alphanumeric paging networks, by then automatically transmitting the caller identification information over the wireless communication link between a central office and a page-receiving communicant. A personal communication device in the possession of the page-receiving communicant automatically processes the caller identification information in a manner which provides the maximum amount of information to the page-receiving communicant in the paging display. Additionally, the page-originating communicant may transmit a message along with the caller identification information, which is also transmitted over the wireless link from the alphanumeric paging central office to the remotely located page-receiving communicant. This message is also processed and displayed in a manner which maximizes the communication of information to the page-receiving communicant.

These and other objectives are achieved as is now described. When characterized as a method, the present invention is directed to a method of communicating information from a page-originating communicant to a page-receiving communicant utilizing an alphanumeric paging network, which operates by generating a page after receiving a paging request from the page-originating communicant over a telephone network. The paging request automatically transfers caller-identification information, including numeric caller-identification information and alphabetic textual caller-identification information, from the telephone network to the alphanumeric paging network. The numeric caller-identification information typically takes the form of a bit string which is representative of the telephone number for a particular telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant in making the paging request. The alphabetic textual caller-identification information typically comprises a directory identification of an entity associated with the particular telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant in making the paging request. The method includes a number of method steps. First, a portable communication device is provided which is identified in the paging network to the page-receiving communicant. The portable communication device includes a database recorded in memory with a plurality of associated data fields, including a telephone number field, means for comparing information obtained from the paging network with at least one of the plurality of associated data fields, and a display member for displaying at least one of (1) information obtained from the paging network, and (2) information obtained from the plurality of data fields. Communication is initiated between the page-originating communicant and the alphanumeric paging network over a telephone network. The caller-identification information is automatically passed from the telephone network to the paging network. The page-originating communicant is allowed an opportunity to input an optional message into the paging network. Since this is an alphanumeric paging network, the optional textual message may include alphanumeric characters (generally, any ASCII characters). The paging network is utilized to transmit to the page-receiving communicant the caller-identification information and the optional message. The caller-identification information and optional message are received at the portable communication device identified in the paging network to the page-receiving communicant. The caller-identification information and optional message are

3

then analyzed, and information is displayed in the display member of the portable communication device as a result of the step of analyzing.

In accordance with the present invention, the optional message may comprise a variety of conventional or state-of-the-art messages, including: (1) a textual message including at least one of numeric data and alphabetic data; (2) an audio message including at least one of a digitized audio signal transmitted through the paging network, and at least of a plurality of predefined audio messages stored in memory of said portable communication device; (3) an image message including at least one of a digitized image signal transmitted through said paging network, and at least one of a plurality of predefined video messages stored in memory of said portable communication device.

Preferably, during the step of analyzing, at least one of the textual identification information, bit string representative of a telephone number corresponding to the telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant, and optional message are compared to at least portions of the database. More particularly, one or more of these items are compared to the telephone number field of the database. Matched items are identified, and utilized in determining what information is displayed in the display of the portable communication device. Preferably, the information which is displayed in the display is based at least in part upon (1) information received in the page, and (2) information contained in the plurality of associated data fields of the database.

In the most particular embodiment of the invention, the caller-identification information is utilized to identify the identity of the page-originating communicant, thus allowing the human operators to concentrate on correctly and efficiently recording the other information contained in the optional message. The human operator need no longer spend a significant quantity of time posing questions to the page-originating communicant to solicit the name and telephone number in an accurate manner. In fact, when the call is received at the central office of the alphanumeric paging network, the page-originating communicant can be engaged in an automated dialog to verify the accuracy of the information contained in the caller-identification signal which is automatically passed from the telephone network to the alphanumeric paging network prior to the second ring of the telephone. Thus, the page-originating communicant can be posed with a series of questions to verify identity and telephone number, before the page-originating communicant is actually connected with the human operator. The present invention also presents significant advantages when the alphanumeric paging network allows for computer-assisted generation of a message. In this particular configuration, the page-originating communicant can be challenged either through an audible series of questions, or a textual series of questions presented on a display screen. Before the alphanumeric paging network goes off-hook to receive the telephone call, the caller-identification information may be decoded and processed so that a synthesized human voice is utilized to present to the page-originating communicant at least two questions which verify the telephone number of the telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant and the directory identification of the entity associated with that telephone number. If the page-originating communicant desires to change this information, he or she can be guided through a series of touch-tone driven menus, as is conventional, to alter the information which has been transmitted in the caller identification signal. If the information is correct, the page-requesting communicant can then dictate or enter the alphanumeric textual message which is trans-

4

mitted through the alphanumeric paging network along with the caller-identification information to the remotely located portable communication device.

The present invention may also be characterized as an apparatus for communicating information from a page-originating communicant to a page-receiving communicant, utilizing an alphanumeric paging network which operates by generating a page after receiving a paging request from the page-originating communicant over a telephone network. The paging request includes caller-identification information of the type which contains at least textual caller-identification information for the page-originating communicant, and optionally, includes a bit string representative of a telephone number of a particular telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant in making the page request. The page includes this caller-identification information and an optional message which is input by the page-originating communicant at the particular telephone unit or which is transcribed by a human operator acting as an intermediary between the page-originating communicant and the page-receiving communicant. The apparatus includes a number of components which cooperate together. It of course includes a portable housing. A reception member is located within the housing for receiving a page in the form of a paging transmission from the paging network. A decoder member is provided for decoding data which is contained in the paging transmission including caller-identification information and any optional message which has been input either by the page-originating communicant or the human intermediary. A memory is provided for maintaining a database with a plurality of associated data fields, including a telephone number field. A software comparator is provided for comparing at least one of (1) the caller-identification information, and (2) said optional message, with at least one of the plurality of associated data fields to identify a matching data item. Finally, a display member is provided for displaying information which identifies at least one of (1) the page-originating communicant, (2) a telephone number for the particular telephone utilized by the page-originating communicant in making the page request (3) other, different telephone numbers at which the page-originating communicant can be reached, and (4) the optional message.

The optional message can of course be a textual message which includes either numeric or alphabetic data. It could also be an audio message which includes at least one of a digitized audio signal transmitted through the paging network, or at least one of a plurality of predefined audio messages which are stored in memory in the portable communication device. Typically, these predefined audio messages may be automatically actuated by the receipt of a particular numeric or alphanumeric code segment which is associated with the particular predefined audio message. The optional message may also include an image message which may include either a digitized image signal transmitted through the paging network, or at least one of a plurality of predefined visual messages which is stored in the memory of the portable communication device. Typically, the visual messages can be particular iconographic representations of information, which are actuated for display by the receipt of a coded message, which is typically a numeric or alphanumeric code.

Additional objectives, features and advantages will be apparent in the written description which follows.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself,

5

however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 depicts a prior art telephone communication network;

FIGS. 2a, 2b, and 2c depict schematically caller-identification information which is transmitted over a telephone network;

FIG. 3 depicts a numeric paging network in accordance with the present invention, which is coupled to a conventional telephone network;

FIG. 4 depicts an alphanumeric paging network in accordance with the present invention, which is coupled with a conventional telephone network;

FIG. 5 depicts a portion of a database which attributes textual messages to particular numeric or alphanumeric codes;

FIG. 6 depicts a memory buffer which stores paging requests received or transmitted to a portable communication device;

FIGS. 7, 8, and 9 depict alternative portable communication devices in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 10 depicts in block diagram form the operational blocks of a portable communication device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 11 depicts in flowchart form the process of engaging a paging network via a telephone network;

FIG. 12 depicts a database with a plurality of data fields which identify information which pertains to potential communicants, and which is maintained in memory within the portable communication device;

FIGS. 13, 14, 15, and 16 depicts alternative configurations of the portable communication device in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 17 is a block diagram representation of the hardware and software components which are utilized to exchange data between a computing device and the portable communication device of the present invention;

FIG. 18 depicts yet another configuration of the components which cooperate to transmit data between a computing device and the portable communication device; and

FIGS. 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 depict in block diagram, schematic, and flowchart form a technique for developing a database with information pertaining to potential communicants for utilization in the portable communication device of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 provides a simplified block diagram of a telephone network, in accordance with the prior art, which will be utilized to describe some fundamentals of telephony which may be necessary to understand the present invention. As is shown, telephone network 9 can be utilized to allow call-originator 11 to utilize telephone 13 to place a telephone call to call-receiver 15, which utilizes telephone 17 to receive such a call. Fairly elaborate switching networks 19 and 21 connect call-originator 11 and call-originator 15 to central office 23 of telephone network 9.

In central office 23, there is a source of electrical current, identified as talk battery 25, which is utilized to determine whether or not a particular telephone (i.e., telephone 13 or

6

15) is in the "on-hook" or "offhook" condition. If the handset of a particular telephone is lifted from the cradle of the telephone, the telephone goes from an on-hook condition to an off-hook condition. When a particular telephone is in an off-hook condition, dial tone generator 27 at central office 23 of telephone network 9 is utilized to generate an audible dial tone which indicates to the telephone operator that an outgoing call may be initiated. For example, call-originator 11 may lift the handset from the cradle of telephone 13, and receive an audible dial tone through the operation of dial tone generator 27 and central office 23.

After call-originator 11 dials the telephone number of call-receiver 15, ring generator 29 at central office 23 generates a plurality of ring signals which are sent through switching network 21 to telephone 17 to alert call-receiver 15 that a call is incoming. Once call-receiver 15 lifts his or her handset off of the cradle of telephone 17, voice path 31 is established between call-originator 11 and call-receiver 15.

In accordance with current Bell standards, caller-identification information may be transmitted, automatically, between call-originator 11 and call-receiver 15, through telephone network 9, in a manner which will be described below with reference to FIGS. 2a, 2b, and 2c. In the United States of America, in accordance with the Bellcore Specification No. 220, the transmission must occur between the first and second rings. In FIG. 2a, such caller-identification information signals transmitted to call-receiver 15 are depicted in simplified form, with caller-identification information 39 occurring between first ring 35 and second ring 37. The Bellcore Specification requires that caller-identification information 39 occur at least 500 milliseconds after first ring 35 ceases. Thus, the signal which represents the caller-identification information will begin transmission one-half of one second, or longer, after the termination of first ring 35. Caller-identification information 39 is transmitted serially, utilizing a frequency-shift-keying technique, which is well known in the prior art.

The Bellcore Specification also requires that the transmission of caller-identification information 39 end at least 427 milliseconds prior to the commencement of second ring 37. Typically, there is a four second interval between first ring 35 and second ring 37, so a significant amount of time is available for the communication of caller-identification information. Altogether, there is available a period of 2,570 milliseconds for the transmission of caller-identification information, not including pauses required by the Bellcore Specification (such pauses or periods of silence are required at the beginning and end of the message). At 1,200 baud, this message interval is sufficient to transmit 3,084 bits, or 308 bytes.

The blocks of data which make-up the caller-identification information 39 is set forth in block diagram form in FIG. 2b. The first component of the caller-identification information is a synchronization signal 41 which comprises a channel seizure signal having a duration of 250 milliseconds of frequency-shift-keying encoding of a bit pattern of alternating zeros and ones. Such a synchronization signal is utilized to provide a recognizable pattern to alert applicable caller-identification decoding equipment that caller-identification information follows. Pre-message pause 43 follows synchronization signal 41, and has a duration of 150 milliseconds, plus or minus 25 milliseconds. The purpose of such a pre-message pause 43 is to condition the receiver for the data which follows.

Next, message-type identifier 45 follows synchronization signal 41. Message-type identifier 45 is typically one byte of

data which identifies the type of caller-identification message which is being sent. There are two basic types of caller-identification messages, including: (1) only numeric data, which identifies the telephone number for the source of the telephone call; and (2) numeric data, which identifies a telephone number for the source of the telephone call, along with hexadecimal representation of alphabetic characters that contain the directory name associated with the telephone number of the source telephone. In accordance with the Bellcore Standard, 04 hexadecimal identifies a single message caller-identification message, while 80 hexadecimal identifies a caller-identification message which includes both a telephone number and a name.

Next, message byte count 47 provides an indication of the total length of the caller-identification information. This is important because the directory name associated with the source telephone number will have a different length for each particular name.

Thereafter, sub-message type 49 identifies the type of submessage which is transmitted with the caller-identification information. Sub-message link 51 identifies the length of the sub-message which follows.

Message 53 consists of information which is described in more detail below with respect to FIG. 2c. Message 53 is followed by checksum byte 55 which, in accordance with the prior art techniques, provides a checksum total to ensure that data received has not been lost or altered in any way during the transmission. The receiving unit of a caller-identification decoder generates a checksum in response to the entire caller-identification bit stream, and thereafter compares this checksum with checksum byte 55. If these checksums match, then no bits were lost in the transmission; however, if the checksum generated by the caller-identification decoder does not match checksum byte 55 received at the decoder, then one or more data bits may have been lost in the transmission, and the information may be unreliable or unusable.

The final component of a caller-identification message is post-message pause 57, which is a quiescent period prior to second ring 37 of FIG. 2a.

With reference now to FIG. 2c, message 53 will be described in greater detail. The first eight bits of the message include month bits "MM", day bits "DD", hour bits "HH", and minute bits "MM". These eight bits provide the month and date, along with the hour and minute, in military time, of the telephone call. Note that no information is provided regarding the year.

The next portion of message 53 is either (1) a ten digit telephone number, or (2) a single digit which identifies that caller-identification information is either (a) not available, or (b) has been blocked to maintain the caller's privacy.

If caller-identification information is not available, the ASCII character "0" is transmitted. If the caller-identification information has been blocked for reasons of privacy, the character P is transmitted. However, if the caller-identification information is neither unavailable nor blocked, then a ten digit bit stream follows. The first three bits, "AAA" identify the area code; the next three bits, "PPP", identifying the prefix; and the final four bits, "EEEE", identify the exchange. For example, if the source phone number is 702-731-1113, then AAA=702, PPP=731, and EEEE=1113.

The next portion of message 53 is caller-identification information which identifies the name associated with the particular preceding telephone number. If this information is unavailable, a single character "0" is provided. If this

information is blocked for reasons of privacy, a single character "P" is provided. However, if this information is both available and not blocked, a multi-bit string follows which sets forth a name associated with the particular preceding telephone number (for example, "John Doe").

Therefore, considered broadly, caller-identification information may be solely data which identifies a telephone number associated with the telephone unit utilized to place a call, or the telephone number associated with the telephone unit utilized to place the call in combination with alphabetic characters identifying a name associated with that particular number in a telephone directory (i.e., a telephone directory data base). In either event, whether the directory name is provided or not, this information can be considered to be the "caller-identification information." The particular details of the caller-identification standards in the United State of America are set forth in the publications of the Bell Communications Research Laboratories, which are identified as "Bellcore", and include (1) Technical Reference No. TR-TSY-00032, issued Nov. 1, 1986, and entitled "CLASS (sm) Feature: Bulk Calling Line Information"; (2) Technical Reference No. TR-TSY-00030, issued Jan. 1, 1990, entitled "CLASS(sm) Feature: Calling Number Delivery"; and (3) Technical Reference No. TANWT-001188, issued Mar. 1, 1991, entitled "CLASS(sm) Calling Name Delivery and Related Features Generic Requirements"; all of which are incorporated herewith by reference as if fully set forth.

FIG. 3 depicts one embodiment of the present invention wherein numeric paging network 61 is utilized to receive caller-identification information via interaction with telephone network 9 in response to call-originator 11 communicating through telephone network 9 with central office 59 of numeric paging network 61. In this configuration, numeric paging network 61 may be utilized to transmit the numeric portions of caller-identification information, and not the alphanumeric portions. FIG. 3 includes telephone network 9, which includes components identical to those discussed above in connection with FIG. 1, with the only difference being that a page request telephone call is received by call receiver 15, which is located within numeric paging network central office 59. Between the first and second rings received by call receiver 15, the caller-identification information is routed through telephone 17 to decoder 63.

Decoder 63 comprises a conventional caller-identification decoder capable of receiving the frequency-shift-keyed caller-identification signal, and decoding it into a bit stream representative of the information described above in connection with FIGS. 2b and 2c. The portion of information corresponding to the telephone number of particular telephone 13 being utilized by call originator 11 is provided as an input to decoder 63. Additionally, telephone 17 is utilized to receive any optional numeric message which is input by call-originator 11 and transmitted over voice path 31 during the time interval provided.

The decoded numeric information which corresponds to the telephone number of the telephone utilized by call-originator 11, and any numeric message input by call-originator 11, are assembled in message buffer 65, which pushes the serial bit stream to transmitter 67 in accordance with a predefined protocol. The present invention may utilize the predefined communication protocol identified as the Post Office Code Standardization Advisory Group (POCSAG) code. Such a code comports with the formats provided by the International Committee CCIR, which has standardized message coding for radio frequency transmissions. Both the POCSAG code and CCIR standards are well

known by those skilled in the art, and both are incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth, but are not essential to the main concepts of the present invention.

Transmitter 67 provides a radio frequency communication link 69 which communicates information from numeric paging network central office 59 to personal communication device 71. Personal communications device 61 may be a receive-only device, such as a paging device, or a more sophisticated bidirectional communication device, such as a personal communication device or personal digital assistant, such as the personal digital assistant sold under the trademark "Macintosh Newton" by Apple Computer, or the product sold by AT&T under the trademark "EO". Preferably, personal communication device 71 at least includes display 73, which is utilized to display information based, at least in-part, upon information contained within a database resident within personal communication device 71, or in-part upon information transmitted over radio frequency communication link 69 from central office 59 of numeric paging network 61.

FIG. 4 provides a block diagram representation of another embodiment of the present invention wherein alphanumeric paging network 75 is utilized to receive caller-identification information. Such caller-identification information which may be received includes numeric information corresponding to the telephone number of telephone 13 utilized by call originator 11 to engage alphanumeric paging network 75, and alphanumeric text which identifies the "entity" listed in a telephone directory (i.e., a database) as the owner of the particular telephone number assigned to telephone 13. Call-receiver 15 receives the incoming call through switching network 21 on behalf of alphanumeric paging network 75. Call-receiver 15 is located within alphanumeric paging network central office 77.

The caller-identification information is routed from telephone 17 to decoder 79, where it is converted from the frequency-shift-key format transmitted within telephone network 9, to an acceptable binary or hexadecimal format. Such decoded caller-identification information includes numeric caller-identification information which corresponds to telephone 13 utilized by call-originator 11 to engage alphanumeric paging network 75, as well as alphanumeric textual information which identifies the "entity", as listed within the telephone directory database, which has ownership of that particular telephone number, along with other additional formatting information which was described above in connection with FIGS. 2a, 2b, and 2c.

This decoded caller-identification information is pushed from decoder 79 to message buffer 81, and may also be provided to automated checking routine 83. Automated checking routine 83 receives caller-identification information and formulates a textual or synthesized voice query, which may then be utilized to communicate with call-originator 11 to verify the telephone number for telephone 13 (which was derived from the caller-identification information) as well as the "entity" identity (which was also derived from the caller-identification information). The query may include the following questions:

(1) The caller-identification information provided to us through the telephone network indicates that the telephone number from which you are placing this call is AAA-PPP-EEEE; please depress your telephone key pad number "1" if this information is correct, or depress telephone key pad "2" if this information is incorrect.

(2) Your previous response has indicated to us that the telephone number provided through the caller-identification

is incorrect. Please enter your correct telephone number at this time beginning with the area code.

(3) The caller-identification information provided to us through the telephone network indicates that this telephone number is assigned to "NNNNNNNN"; please depress "1" if this information is correct. If this information is not correct, please hold for an operator.

(4) Please stand by for an operator if you desire to leave a detailed message; otherwise, please hang-up and your page will be directed to the intended recipient which you should now identify by depressing the keys on your telephone key pad, with the area code being entered first.

(5) If no detailed message is desired, hang-up and your page will be directed to area code "AAA", telephone number "PPP-EEEE". Thank you.

After this automated verification of the caller-identification number occurs, human operator 85 may be made available to call-originator 11 to take a detailed alphanumeric textual message. Human operator 85 keys a particular message into message buffer 81 prior to transmission of the message by transmitter 87, via radio frequency communication link 89, to remotely located personal communication device 91 which includes display 93. Upon receipt of the page, personal communication device 91 generates information for display in display 93 based at least in part on at least one of: (1) information communicated via radio frequency communication link 89; or (2) information contained within a database maintained within personal communication device 91.

While FIGS. 3 and 4 have been described with reference to a numeric paging network and an alphanumeric paging network, the present invention may be utilized with an alphanumeric paging network which allows for communication of a variety of page-originator generated messages, in a variety of formats. Such messages may be provided to the portable personal communication device in a variety of formats, including:

(1) textual information which include either numeric only, or alphanumeric data;

(2) digitized voice or audio information which may be communicated in analog form through the telephone network to the central office of the alphanumeric paging network, where the information is then digitized, and transmitted in a digital format which, upon reception, may be reconstructed to define an analog voice or audio signal which drives an audio output device resident in the personal communication device; or

(3) digitized image information, such as a video image or an iconographic representation of information, which may be transmitted over the voice channel of the telephone network and received at the central office of the alphanumeric paging network, where it is then digitized, and transmitted to the remotely located personal communication device, where the digital information is reconstructed into an image which may be displayed on a display resident in the personal communication device.

Given this variety of message-format inputs, the personal communication device can provide an equally impressive array of display options. Textual input (including numeric and alphanumeric characters) can be displayed in a conventional manner on a simple and relatively inexpensive alphanumeric LCD display. Additionally, text which is provided as input to the personal communication device via the radio frequency communication link, may be utilized with a voice synthesizer to provide synthesized voice as an output from an audio output device resident in, or coupled to, the personal communication device.

Alternatively, an alphanumeric or numeric input supplied to the personal communication device may be utilized to recall one of a plurality of prestored audio output messages. For example, a table may be provided which identifies particular alphanumeric codes as corresponding to particular audio output messages. The binary characters "1111" may correspond to the audio output message "phone home now". Alternatively, a different code, such as "001," may correspond to the audio output message "phone your office now". The prerecorded and predetermined audio output messages may define a plurality of messages which alert the page-receiving communicant that a page has been received from a particular source, and indicating a particular urgency or requesting a level of diligence in response thereto.

Of course, as another option, digitized audio or voice data may be reconstituted into analog format to provide an audio output corresponding almost directly to the audio input provided by the page-originating communicant over the telephone lines to the central office of the paging network.

Digitized images may also be transmitted to the personal communication device in this manner for display on a more elaborate display, such as a personal computer-type display. Finally, digitized audio may be provided as an input to the personal communication device, which, in turn, may be utilized to generate a combination of signals, which may include an audible signal, or a preselected image, such as an icon, which may be placed on the display.

FIG. 5 provides one example of the utilization of a numeric message code, which is input at the personal communication device, to generate a textual message which provides, to the page-receiving communicant, information which allows him or her to respond in an appropriate manner to the page. As is shown in FIG. 5, the message code number column on the left corresponds to a textual message code on the right. Receipt of the "*1" message code results in the display of the message "call when you return" on the personal communication device. The receipt of the message code "*2" results in the display of the textual message "voice mail received" on the personal communication device. Receipt of the "*3" message code results in the display of the textual message "fax mail received" on the personal communication device. Receipt of the "*4" message code results in the display of the textual message "electronic mail received" on the personal communication device. Receipt of the "*5" message code at the personal communication device results in the display of the textual message "image data received". Receipt of the "*6" message code results in the display of the textual message "other data received" on the personal communication device. Finally, receipt of the "**911" message code at the personal communication device results in the display of the textual message "call immediately".

Of course, other various preselected and predefined textual messages are possible. To facilitate the use of this system, the paging network may provide a synthesized-voice and keypad driven exchange between the call-originating communicant and the central office of the paging network. Such an interface may be utilized until the various page-originating communicants learn one or more of the most useful message codes. After such message codes are learned, a user may thereafter bypass the synthesized-voice menu. Preferably, the information provided to the page-receiving communicant is stored in memory within the personal communication device for review at a later time. Typically, the personal communication device includes memory buffers sufficient to hold a selected number of messages received via the paging network, and other corresponding data.

FIG. 6 provides a view of one way in which the data received from the page-originating communicant may be organized. Such organized data may be stored at either the central office of the paging network or within the memory allocated for such purpose within the personal communication device. As illustrated, a plurality of locations are provided for storing caller-identification information (i.e., locations in the first column), DTMF data which may be entered by the page-originating communicant by utilizing the telephone handset (the second column), and caller message data which may be provided by the page-originating communicant through utilization of a variety of messaging techniques, but in this example, an alphanumeric messaging technique, such as that discussed above with respect to FIG. 5.

FIGS. 7, 8, 9a, 9b, and 9c provide views of three alternative physical configurations for the personal communication device in accordance with the present invention. Personal communication device 101 of FIG. 7 allows for two-way communication with the paging network. Personal communication device 101 includes display 103, which is preferably a display of the type utilized in portable personal computers, such as notebook computers. Display 103 may be utilized to display information, such as caller-identification information 105. Caller-identification information 105 may include an alphabetic identification of the name associated with the telephone number transmitted with the caller-identification information, or may include optional message 107 input by the page-originating communicant during the request for a page via the telephone network.

As is shown, other information 109, such as an address associated with the page-initiating communicant 105, may be retrieved from a database in the memory of the personal communication device and displayed along with the caller-identification information on display 103.

Personal communication device 101 of FIG. 7 also includes keyboard 111 and graphical pointing device 113, such as a touch pen, which may be utilized to select icons, menu buttons, or other items displayed in a graphical user interface. Preferably, personal communication device 101 allows two-way communication, and includes a cellular link to the telephone network and/or paging network. Additionally, data card 115 may be provided to load personal communication device 101 with a preconfigured database containing information pertaining to parties with which frequent communication may occur.

FIG. 8 provides a view of an alternative personal communication device 117, which allows only one-way communication; personal communication device 117 may receive information from the paging network, but may not directly originate an outgoing communication with the telephone network, or with the paging network. As is shown, personal communication device 117 includes display 119, which may display identification 121 of the page-originating communicant, along with his or her address. Telephone field 123 is also provided for displaying a telephone number at which the page-originating communicant may be reached. Furthermore, short message 125 may be provided to indicate either (1) the type of information which has been received at the paging network, or (2) the degree of urgency attached to the particular information received.

Data card 127 may be utilized to load personal communication device 117 with additional database information. In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the information displayed in display 119 is based at least in-part upon caller-identification information, and at least in-part

13

upon information recalled from the database resident in the memory of personal communication device 117 or within data card 127. As is shown in FIG. 8, keyboard 129 is provided to allow the page-receiving communicant a means to enter or manipulate data within the database.

A third, and still different, embodiment of the present invention is depicted in FIGS. 9a, 9b, and 9c. FIG. 9a provides a view of the bottom portion of personal communication device 131. Note that audio output device 133 is provided. Mechanical coupler 135 provides a means for acoustically coupling personal communication device 131 to any telephone equipment, particularly the mouthpiece of a telephone handset, against which audio output device 133 is disposed.

FIG. 9b provides a side view of personal communication device 131 of FIG. 9a. Note that RJ11 telephone jack, 137 is provided to connect the telephone line, to personal communication device 131.

FIG. 9c provides a view of the top portion of personal communication device 131. Display 139 is provided to receive and display numeric data, alphanumeric data, and images. A plurality of icons 141 are provided about display 139, each of which is dedicated for the communication of particular information. For example, icon 143 is representative of a clock, and may be utilized to indicate to the page-receiving communicant that time-sensitive information has been communicated to the paging network. For an alternative example, icon 145, which depicts a telephone, is provided to indicate to the page-receiving communicant that a telephone message has been received by the paging network. A variety of other dedicated iconographic representations are provided about display 139, each of which is dedicated to communicate particular, predefined information to the page-receiving communicant pertaining to information deposited at the paging network.

The device depicted in FIGS. 9a, 9b, and 9c allows only the receipt of information from the paging network, and utilizes the dedicated icons to communicate particular types of information to the page-receiving communicant. This allows the small display 139 to be utilized for less-routine types of information.

FIG. 10 provides a block diagram view of portable communication device 201. As is shown, portable communication device 201 includes central processing unit 203, which preferably comprises a microprocessor. The microprocessor of central processing unit 203 interacts with the plurality of hardware and software components. Key pad input unit 231 communicates with central processing unit 203 to allow for the operator to depress particular keys on a keyboard thereby inputting data into portable communication device 201. Receiver unit 233 is utilized to receive radio frequency communication from the paging central office. Decoder unit 235 is utilized to decode radio frequency signals received from receiver unit 233. Decoder unit 235 communicates with central processing unit 203 to power-up central processing unit 203 when a page notification intended for portable communication device 201 is received at receiver unit 233. ID-ROM 237 is utilized to record in memory a particular numeric or alphanumeric identifying information which is provided to code each particular portable communication device in a paging network so that it is responsive to a particular radio frequency transmission. ID-ROM 237 records the particular identification code assigned to that particular communication device.

Central processing unit 203 communicates through display buffer 205, in a conventional manner, to place numeric

14

data, alphanumeric data, and images, such as icons, on display unit 207. Light-emitting-diode 211 is provided to provide a flashing indication of the receipt of a page. LED driver 209 is positioned intermediate central processing unit 203 and LED 211, to allow central processing unit 203 to drive LED 211 in a variety of flashing patterns. Sound-signal generating unit 213 is coupled between central processing unit 203 and audio output device 215. Central processing unit 203 provides binary control signals to sound-signal generating unit 213 which result in the output of a particular tone, at a particular volume and a particular frequency. DTMF signal generating unit 217 is coupled between central processing unit 203 and audio output device 215. It is utilized, when desired, to generate dialing tones which may be communicated through audio output device 215 to the mouthpiece of a telephone to place a call utilizing the telephone network. Buffer 219 is coupled to central processing unit 203 and DTMF signal generating unit 217, and is provided for queuing of DTMF generating signals. Voice processing unit 221 is coupled to central processing unit 203 to allow the analog-to-digital and digital-to-analog conversion of speech and other audio input (102 of FIG. 7 and 102 of FIG. 9c) or output (133 of FIG. 7 and 133 of FIG. 9a).

Several housekeeping functional blocks are also provided in the view of FIG. 10. RAM 229 is provided as a memory cache. In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, a database including a plurality of fields which identify actual or potential communicants by name, address, and appropriate telephone and facsimile numbers, is resident within RAM 229. Character generator 225 communicates with central processing unit 203 to generate particular alphanumeric characters in response to commands from central processing unit 203. MAC/PC download memory 227 operates a data exchange buffer to allow for the communication of data between central processing unit 203 and personal computer 239. Personal computer 239 may be utilized to store in memory the database which is intermittently downloaded through MAC/PC download memory 227 for storage in RAM 229. As is shown in FIG. 10, personal computer 239 is coupled in a node mail network which allows for voice mail service (VMS), fax mail service (FMS), electronic mail service (EMS), paging service (PS), images, and connection to information services.

FIG. 11 provides a flowchart representation of the technique in accordance with the present invention for communicating information between a page-originating communicant and a page-receiving communicant. The process starts at software block 251, wherein the page-originating communicant (user) utilizes the telephone network to access an automated data entry system. As discussed above, upon establishment of a voice circuit between the telephone unit utilized by the page-originating communicant and the paging center, the caller identification information, if any exists, is automatically transferred to the central office, where it is decoded and preferably utilized in accordance with software block 255 in a recorded menu exchange, wherein the information is verified and/or corrected and/or supplemented.

In software block 257, the page-originating communicant enters optional data. This optional data may be numeric data, alphanumeric data, digitized speech, facsimile messages, or images. In accordance with software block 259, the paging system identifies when the data entry has been completed, and confirms the data entry in accordance with software block 261. In accordance with software block 265, the paging network verifies the data, preferably by displaying it or otherwise making it available to the page-originating communicant. In accordance with software block 263, the

15

page-originating communicant hangs-up, and then, in accordance with software block 267, the data, including the caller-identification information and any optional or other data attached to the page information, is transmitted via radio frequency communication link 269 to portable communication device 271.

The most common application of the present invention requires that the page-originating communicant enter either numeric or alphanumeric data which is identified with the caller-identification information. Upon receipt by portable communication device 271, at least one of either the numeric caller-identification information, or the alphabetic caller-identification information, or the optional data entered by the page-originating communicant is compared to one or more data fields in a database which is maintained within memory (preferably RAM 229 of FIG. 10) of portable communication device 271 (of FIG. 11).

FIG. 12 depicts one example of such a database. As shown, there are five data fields associated with each entry: a telephone number field, a fax number field, a name field, an "other data" field (preferably utilized for addresses) and a notification type and intensity field.

In one particular embodiment of the present invention, the numeric or alphanumeric data entered by the page-requesting communicant is compared to an appropriate data field. For example, if the page-originating communicant entered numeric telephone data as part of the page request, this numeric telephone data is compared to numeric data fields which are representative of telephone numbers in order to determine if one or more matches exist. If a match exists, it is probable that the page-requesting communicant is the entity identified in an associated data field. For example, if a telephone number is entered in the page request which corresponds to the first number in the database, it is highly likely that Mr. Hashimoto, the first name in the database, is the page-originating communicant.

The caller-identification information is also compared with one or more data fields in the database. In one specific embodiment, numeric telephone data from the caller-identification information is compared to numeric fields which represent telephone numbers, in order to determine if one or more matches exist. If no matches exist, it is highly likely that Mr. Hashimoto is calling from a telephone which is not ordinarily associated with him. The page-receiving communicant can then decide to either return the call immediately, or defer it to a later time. In this event, the page-receiving communicant knows that Mr. Hashimoto is the likely page-originating communicant, and that he can be reached at this particular time at the number identified in the caller-identification information. In this manner, a protocol can be devised which automatically access one or more of: (1) numeric or alphabetic characters that are located within the caller-identification signal; and/or (2) numeric or alphanumeric characters entered by the page-originating communicant into one or more data fields, in order to identify the likely identity of the page-originating communicant, and to further to identify whether the likely page-originating communicant is calling from a familiar telephone or an unfamiliar telephone.

In instances where the caller-identification information fails to produce a match, the page-receiving communicant may be provided with a particular type of notification to indicate that a person is contacting him or her, or attempting to contact him or her, and such a person is not listed within the database at this time. This may prompt the owner of the personal communication device to utilize a key pad or alternative means to enter that entity upon return of the telephone call.

16

The notification type field is interesting, insofar as it is user configurable, allowing the page-receiving communicant to identify a particular type, or subtype, of paging notification with one or more particular likely communicants. For example, LED displays from LED 201 (of FIG. 10) may be utilized to identify work associates, while audio tones emitted from audio output device 215 (of FIG. 10) may be utilized to indicate that friends or family are attempting to notify the page-receiving communicant.

Preferably, the user may establish intensity levels or sequence levels for particular types of page alert notifications. For example, the notation "VI" indicates a visual indication with a high intensity. In contrast, the notation "BL" may denote a beep (that is, audio output) of a low intensity. Still, in further contrast, the notation "T" may identify that, for this particular potential communicant, only textual messages should be utilized to identify receipt of the page. In this hierarchical structure, the entity which is assigned the "T" notification type and intensity, is a fairly low priority potential communicant, while the communicant which has the "VI" notification type and intensity indicator identified therewith is a relatively high priority communicant. In this manner, the page-receiving communicant may be able to prioritize his or her return phone call activities.

A variety of mechanisms by which the owner of the portable communication device may enter data, revise data, or review data are depicted graphically in FIGS. 13, 14, 15, and 16.

FIG. 13 depicts a portable communication device with a detachable input interface, such as keyboard 301, which releasably connects through connector 303 to paging receiver 307. Display 305 is also included in paging receiver 307. Paging receiver 307 also includes pager operation switches 309. The owner of this paging device may selectively releasably connect keyboard 301 to paging receiver 307, and then depress one or more keys on keyboard 301 to enter data at a cursor location which is presented within display 305. This device stands in sharp contrast with the device of FIG. 14, which includes keyboard 311 that is substantially permanently coupled to paging receiver 313. Paging receiver 313 also includes display 315. Paging receiver 313 preferably includes pager operation switches 317. The operator may utilize keyboard 311 to enter or modify data within display 315. More particularly, the operator may utilize keyboard 311 to add or modify data contained in the plurality of fields of the database maintained within the memory of the portable communication device.

FIG. 15 provides yet another alternative embodiment contemplated under the present invention. As is shown, paging receiver 321 is provided, and can be selectively and releasably coupled to personal computer 327 via a serial hardware line, a parallel hardware line, an infrared link, or a radio frequency link. Personal computer 327 may be utilized to create and maintain the database with a plurality of data fields, including such fields as communicant's name, communicant's telephone number, communicant's fax number, communicant's address, and a field containing an operator-selectable notification attribute or type. Such data may be intermittently transferred between personal computer 327 and paging receiver 321, and maintained within a random access memory within paging receiver 321.

Paging receiver 321 includes display 323 and pager operation switches 319, which allow for conventional paging functions. In this embodiment, the data contained within the database of paging receiver 319 is periodically refreshed

17

by the owner by conducting memory dumps from personal computer 327 to paging receiver 321. Upon receipt of a page notification, the caller identification information and/or optional data input by the page-originating communicant is compared with one or more fields of the database contained within the memory of paging receiver 321.

FIG. 16 provides a view of yet another alternative embodiment contemplated in the present invention. In this system, a very inexpensive paging unit, with limited display capabilities, includes a memory for the receipt of the database with a plurality of data fields including communicant's names, communicant's phone numbers, communicant's fax numbers, communicant's addresses, and any user-selected notification attribute identified to that particular communicant. The communication is periodically dumped in a methodical fashion from personal computer 329 via wireless infrared communicator 331 to portable paging receiver 333.

FIGS. 17 and 18 provide block diagram views of the software and hardware components which facilitate the communication of the database between a computing device, such as a personal computer, and the portable communication device. In accordance with FIG. 17, the personal computing device 401 includes operating system 403, desktop application programs 405, data files 407, and intellect communication software 409 which is resident in memory within the computing device, and which is utilized in the transfer of information between computing device 401 and the portable communication device 413, which includes download memory 419 which is adapted to receive the database information. As is shown, the portable communication device 413 may be connected via either hardware communication link 411, local infrared communication 415, or remote telephone input 417. In FIG. 18, a laptop architecture is displayed for laptop 421, which includes operating system 423, personal information manager 425, data files 427, PCMCIA interface 429 and communication software 431 which facilitates the transfer of information from the memory of the laptop computing device 421 to the portable computing device 433.

FIG. 19 depicts yet another technique for entering and modifying data which is present within the database present within the memory of the portable communication device. As is shown, the page-receiving communicant inputs data on a physical form 435, which identifies communicant's names, communicant's telephone numbers, communicant's fax numbers, communicant's addresses, and any associated notification attribute for that particular communicant. Alternatively, information is provided via an automated user input request system 437 which preferably utilizes either a portable computing device, a stationary computing device, or a telephone to input data which is to be communicated via radio common carrier 439 to paging transmitter 441, which communicates via radio frequency communication link 443 to paging receiver 445. The techniques for modifying the database are depicted in flowchart form in FIG. 20. The process starts at software block 451, and continues at software blocks 452, 453, and 454, wherein data is either manually entered or automatically entered and routed through software block 453. In accordance with software block 455, data is processed at a radio common carrier, and transmitted to software block 457, where it is determined whether local programming is required, if so, the process continues at software block 459; if not, the process continues at software block 460. In either event, data is communicated to portable communication device 461 for creation, supplementation, or modification of the database contained in memory in portable communication device 461. In accordance

18

with the flowchart of FIG. 20, software block 456 requires that message code cards be printed, and delivered in accordance with software block 458 to a dealer or customer. The software steps associated with the utilization of these code cards is depicted in flowchart form in FIG. 21. In accordance with software block 465, the page customer receives the printed message card along with the pager at the beginning of pager service. In accordance with software block 467, the page customer distributes the message cards to callers, and instructs them to fill the data fields in the cards. In the flow of FIG. 21, the cards are distributed to callers A, B, and C in accordance with software blocks 469, 471, 473. The callers consult their message cards, and enter the code data, and transmit it through telephone office 477 to radio common carrier 479, which forwards it to paging transmitter 41, which establishes a radio frequency link with portable communication device 43.

FIGS. 22 and 23 depict two types of standardized message code cards. The card of FIG. 22, the call-receiving communicant's pager ID number is identified, along with the telephone number for the paging center. Then, a plurality of numeric or alphanumeric codes are provided in a field, with an area to the right for providing numeric or alphanumeric messages which correspond to the numeric or alphanumeric codes. For example, the numeric value "0" may correspond to the answer "no", while the numeric value "1" may correspond to the answer "yes". In the view of FIG. 23, an alternative standardized message code card is provided, which provides alphanumeric or numeric characters with alphabetic textual messages. For example, the numeric code "11" corresponds to the message "pick up the kids". Additionally, the potential communicant can enter phone data and fax data in fields which are dedicated for that purpose. This information is entered on a wide number of cards by people who are likely to communicate with the paging subscriber. They are mailed in or entered in by the potential communicants, to form a database which is periodically communicated to the page receiving apparatus.

While the invention has been shown in only one of its forms, it is not thus limited but is susceptible to various changes and modifications without departing from the spirit thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of communicating information from a page-originating communicant to a page-receiving communicant utilizing an alphanumeric paging network which operates by generating a page after receiving a paging request from said page-originating communicant over a telephone network, comprising the method steps of:

(a) providing a portable communication device identified in said paging network to said page-receiving communicant, said portable communication device including:

- (1) a database recorded in memory with a plurality of associated data fields, including a numeric field which includes data which is representative of telephone numbers; and
- (2) means for comparing information obtained from said paging network with at least one of said plurality of associated data fields;
- (3) a display member for displaying at least one of (a) information obtained from said paging network, and (b) information obtained from said plurality of data fields;

(b) initiating communication between said page-originating communicant and said alphanumeric paging network over said telephone network;

19

- (c) automatically passing said caller-identification information from said telephone network to said paging network, said caller identification information including at least one of (1) textual identification information for said page-originating communicant, and (2) a bit string representation of a telephone number for a particular telephone unit utilized by said page-originating communicant in making said paging request;
- (d) allowing input by said page-originating communicant of an optional message into said paging network;
- (e) utilizing said paging network to transmit to said page-receiving communicant (1) said caller-identification information, including at least one of (a) textual identification information for said page-originating communicant, and (b) a bit string representation of a telephone number for a particular telephone unit utilized by said page-originating communicant in making said paging request, and (2) said optional message;
- (f) receiving (1) said caller-identification information, including at least one of (a) textual identification information for said page-originating communicant, and (b) a bit string representation of a telephone number for a particular telephone unit utilized by said page-originating communicant in making said paging request, and (2) said optional message at said portable communication device identified in said paging network to said page-receiving communicant;
- (g) utilizing said portable communication device for analyzing said caller-identification information, including at least one of (1) textual identification information for said page-originating communicant, and (2) a bit string representation of a telephone number for a particular telephone unit utilized by said page-originating communicant in making said paging request, and (3) optional message by utilizing said means for comparing which is resident in said portable communication device to compare said caller-identification information and said optional message with particular ones of said plurality of associated data fields of said database recorded in memory of said portable communication device; and

20

- (h) displaying information in said display member of said portable communication device resulting from said step of analyzing.
- 2. A method of communicating according to claim 1, wherein said optional message comprises at least one of:
 - (a) a textual message including at least one of (1) numeric data, and (2) alphabetic data;
 - (b) an audio message including at least one of (1) a digitized audio signal transmitted through said paging network, and (2) at least one of a plurality of predefined audio messages stored in memory of said portable communication device; and
 - (c) an image message including at least one of (1) a digitized image signal transmitted through said paging network, and (2) at least one of a plurality of predefined visual messages stored in memory of said portable communication device.
- 3. A method of communicating according to claim 1, wherein said step of analyzing includes:
 - comparing at least one of (1) said textual identification information, (2) said bit string representative of a telephone number, and (3) said optional message, to at least portions of said database.
- 4. A method of communicating, according to claim 1, wherein said step of analyzing includes:
 - comparing at least one of (1) said textual identification information, (2) said bit string representative of a telephone number, and (3) said optional message, to said telephone number field.
- 5. A method of communicating, according to claim 4, wherein said step of analyzing further includes:
 - identifying matches with at least one matched data item in said telephone number field.
- 6. A method of communicating, according to claim 1, wherein said step of displaying includes:
 - displaying information which is based at least in part upon one of (1) information received, and (2) information contained in said plurality of associated fields of said database.

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